Guillaume de Machaut

La Prise d'Alixandre

(The Taking of Alexandria)

EDITED AND TRANSLATED BY

R. Barton Palmer

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To my father, Ralph Stuart Palmer,
who entertained his son for hours with tales of knights
and the taking of cities

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As an undergraduate many years ago, I was inspired by Charles T. Wood, Daniel Webster Professor of History Emeritus at Dartmouth College, to study the history and literature of the late Middle Ages. Professor Wood also furthered this present project through careful and judicious readings of my initial attempts at translating a different kind of French from that with which my previous work on Machaut and Froissart had given me some familiarity. A huge debt is also owed to the interlibrary loan departments at both Georgia State University and Clemson University, who struggled valiantly to provide the rare and often arcane materials needed to elucidate the historical context of Machaut's poem. The Calhoun Lemon endowment contributed substantially to research costs and supported the released time necessary to complete the writing of the book. Barbara Ramirez contributed many hours of data entry. William Calin supplied invaluable assistance with difficult passages, and I have profited during the last decade from my close association with Machaut scholars too numerous to name here. If this work has merit, it is in no small measure because of the enthusiasm I share with them for an author whose genius and many accomplishments, both musical and literary, are just beginning to be properly appreciated. Camden and Carla Palmer patiently tolerated my preoccupation with a project that took more than five years to complete.

Introduction

LIFE OF THE AUTHOR

After delivering a manuscript containing, among his other works, *The Taking of Alexandria* (*La Prise d'Alixandre*) of Guillaume de Machaut to Count Louis de Male of Flanders (see Earp 1995, 57), Eustache Deschamps dedicated a poem to his literary master in which he affirms:

> All your works are with great honor
> Received by all in many a far-off place,
> And there no one, to my knowledge,
> Speaks anything of them but praise.
> Guillaume, the great lords hold you very dear
> And take pleasure in what you write.
> (Text quoted in Hœpffner 1908–21, I: iv)

Elsewhere Deschamps observes that Machaut "nourished" him and "paid him many kindnesses," so perhaps we should consider his opinion of the older poet's reputation somewhat inflated by gratitude and personal admiration. Yet Deschamps is hardly the only contemporary writer to offer a favorable opinion of Machaut's artistic accomplishments and their reception among the nobility. Martin le Franc terms him a "grand rhetorician," while King René d'Anjou praises him as a "renowned poet," according Machaut a place in his *Ospital d'amour* (Love's Mansion) alongside Alain Chartier, Boccaccio, and Petrarch in this pantheon of vernacular authors.

Along with his evident influence on many poets of the late fourteenth and fifteenth centuries and the patronage he enjoyed from noble families during his long career, such remarks indicate that Guillaume de Machaut was one of the most famous and esteemed poets of fourteenth-century France (see Earp 1995, the essential starting point for all work on Machaut).

Machaut's reputation rested on his production of an immense and varied corpus of works, many of which were composed for, and in honor of, the several grand nobles with whose courts he was at various times associated. As a musician, he set more than forty balades, thirty virelays, twenty rondeaux, lais and motets and composed a polyphonic setting of the Mass. The virtuosity and innovations of these compositions made him

one of the most important figures of late medieval music (of the two editions of Machaut's music, Ludwig 1926–9/1954 is the more accurate and Schrade 1956 the more readable). And Machaut was largely responsible for the continuing fashion for lyric poetry set to music which lasted right through the fifteenth century (see Chichmaref 1909 and Wilkins 1972).

Following in the tradition of thirteenth-century love vision poetry, especially the *Roman de la Rose* (*Romance of the Rose*), Machaut composed ten long narrative and didactic poems. Eight of these are *dits amoureux* (love poems), while the two others take up philosophical/religious or historical themes. Machaut also wrote four shorter narrative poems, and these are all concerned with love (see the Selected Bibliography for details about editions). The last of his major *dits*, however, abandoned literary models to chronicle contemporary events that had captured the imagination of Christian Europe. Along with Froissart's *Chroniques* and long Arthurian romance *Meliador*, among works by others, the *Prise d'Alixandre* launched a literary movement during the closing years of the century that can appropriately be termed the "chivalric revival." This amazingly detailed and accurate verse biography of Pierre I, king of Cyprus, celebrates knightly honor and valor. Its centerpiece is a detailed account, based on eyewitness testimony, of Pierre's improbable capture of Alexandria, the richest and most populous city known to the west. The twin virtues of knightly courage and religious fervor were quickly losing prominence in a time of profound social change. Yet late fourteenth century writers like Froissart and Machaut, and the noble patrons that supported them, were eager to celebrate the aristocratic code steeped in the Christian zeal of the High Middle Ages.

Machaut's poems, including the *Prise d'Alixandre*, evidently pleased the high-born audiences for whom they were originally written. The number of rich surviving manuscripts, some beautifully illuminated, testifies eloquently to this popularity (see Earp 1995, 73–128 for descriptions of all sources, including details of original owners where known).

Unlike earlier medieval poets, Machaut was very much concerned with establishing a "poetic identity" for himself first, by often making a fictional alter ego into a main character and, second, by ensuring that his works were collected and attractively presented in omnibus manuscript, some possibly executed under his personal supervision (see Brownlee 1984). One result is that his *dits* exerted a considerable influence on other contemporary writers and some of the generation to follow, especially Deschamps, Jean Froissart, Christine de Pizan, and Geoffrey Chaucer, whose poetry shows a close and reverent reading of narrative works by the French master. The *Prise* helped continue and expand the popularity of chivalric verse chronicle and biography into the next century.

Machaut was not born into a noble or bourgeois family (Earp 1995, 4–5) even though he was to become a servant of the noble and famous. Thus little is known about his life beyond what is preserved in various ecclesiastical documents and the poet's own works, which contain a fair

number of biographical indications. From documents that detail his appointment to different benefices, it can be inferred that Machaut was born at the beginning of the fourteenth century and probably in Champagne. Since the same documents fail to accord him any of the titles that would indicate noble birth, it can also be safely assumed he was not well-born. This is consistent with the self-portrait that emerges from the poetry, in which Machaut often makes his diegetic alter ego a humble or even cowardly clerk who moves uncertainly among his betters, the butt of mild class humor. The following passage from his *Dit de la fonteinne amoureuse* (Story of the Fountain of Love) is especially revealing:

> And though I might be a clerk
> Who is ignorant, incapable, and inept,
> Yet I've been, by my two faiths,
> In such a place [i.e. a battle] several times
> With the good King of Bohemia,
> And may God keep his soul among His company,
> And despite myself I was brave
> Since there was no place, no path,
> No byway where I knew to flee
> And thus I had to be courageous.
>
> (lines 139–148 in Palmer 1993, 96–7)

A similar passage occurs in the *Jugement dou roy de Navarre* (Judgment of the King of Navarre). Here a poet named Guillaume de Machaut encounters a beautiful and distinguished lady while hunting rabbits (she is, it turns out, Lady Good Fortune). Starting to dismount, Guillaume is dissuaded from such an unmannerly act of obeisance by the lady herself. Returning her greeting, the poet confides to his readers that he has learned well how to honor those of higher station than himself:

> Then I went on ahead, and when I saw
> Her noble person replete
> With honor, grace, and learning,
> As a sign of great reverence
> I made to get off my horse;
> But at once she started to forbid it,
> Saying quite politely:
> "Oh no, Guillaume, this won't do.
> You must not dismount;
> Speak to me from your horse."
> And when I heard this, I obliged
> And gave her as fine a greeting
> As I could and knew how to,
> In the manner I should,
> Just as I had learned to honor people of such rank.
>
> (lines 739–754 in Palmer 1988, 33–5)

Various documents refer to Machaut as "master." This suggests that after an early education, quite probably in the cathedral school at Reims, Machaut pursued theological studies at a university, probably Paris, finishing with the degree of *magister artium* (master of arts) (Earp 1995, 7–8). Machaut, however, did not go on to take holy orders, or so it can be assumed since he is nowhere referred to as a priest and only served in offices, like the canonicate, open to those outside the priesthood. Most university students left after taking the master's degree to begin a career in secular or religious administration.

Machaut followed this path, one that permitted lowborn clerics, who like himself had the right education and social graces, to advance in society. Through circumstances no longer known, Machaut became associated, while in his early twenties, with one of the most colorful nobles of the era, Jean of Luxembourg, the king of Bohemia. It may be that Machaut came to Jean's notice during one of the latter's sojourns in northern France, perhaps his visit to Reims for the coronation of Charles IV in 1322 (Earp 1995, 12). To the modern historian, Jean appears an extravagant and perhaps unstable figure. To his contemporaries, however, the king's fabled prodigality, the restlessness with which he sought to expand and consolidate the lands under his rule, and his reputed social finesse made him the very type of ideal ruler. In the *Confort d'ami* (*Comfort for a Friend*) and elsewhere, including the *Prise* (see lines 771–792 of the present edition), Machaut speaks of Jean with the highest respect and reverence. In the *Confort*, Machaut details his experiences as Jean's secretary and chaplain. These include a sojourn at the castle of Burglitz (1323), a series of military expeditions through Poland, Russia, and Lithuania (1329), Jean's invasion of northern Italy (1330–1331), and his involvement in Austrian affairs (1331) (Earp 1995, 12–14 itemizes these references and provides further information). Ecclesiastical documents suggest that Machaut remained in Jean's service until the king's heroic death: he was led blind into the battle to fight at Crécy in 1346 and was cut down by English knights along with his devoted entourage.

So willing to provide information about his early association with Jean, Machaut offers few indications about any experiences with the king after 1331. This may mean two things. During the last fifteen years or so of his life, Jean's fortunes notably declined. Machaut does not mention the king's second marriage to the French princess Beatrice of Bourbon (1334); the loss of an eye (1337) and the king's desperate, often revengeful attempts to restore it; finally his complete loss of sight in 1339 and stubborn refusal to withdraw from a restless and active public life. Nor does Machaut recount military activities in the east, especially Jean's continuing difficulty in Bohemia (which culminated in the somewhat scandalous pillage of the synagogues in Prague) and renewed hostilities in Austria, his victories there marred once again by questionable looting of a holy place. Machaut's silence may be a polite way of dealing with Jean's private sorrow and public troubles. After a long and effusive homage to Jean in the *Confort*, Machaut declares that he will not give more details

about his doings "on the other side of the Rhine" but that no one faults him (see lines 3083–6 in Palmer 1992, 160–1). Or his reticence may simply mean that he was no longer a member of Jean's entourage and so could not testify directly about what happened. In any case, we can infer from his productivity as poet and musician that Machaut was spending increasing time in Reims, where Jean had arranged for his appointment as canon (an office he assumed in 1337). This relative inactivity afforded him the opportunity for a literary career.

During his association with Jean, Guillaume established a reputation as a writer with musical and, especially, poetical works. Evidence of various kinds suggests that three of his longer *dits* were certainly composed and circulated prior to 1342: *Le Dit dou vergier* (The Story of the Orchard); *Le Jugement dou roy de Behaingne* (The Judgment of the King of Bohemia); and *Le Remede de Fortune* (Fortune's Remedy). It was their success that enabled Machaut to acquire other noble patrons after Jean's death.

Following Crécy, Guillaume must have found himself in a secure but unpromising position. His ecclesiastical offices offered him a living, but hardly in the style and magnificence to which as secretary and chaplain of a grand noble he must have become comfortably accustomed. Manuscript illuminations suggest that his residence in Reims was richly furnished for that of a canon. But a noted poet was for noble households a quite desirable acquisition; Machaut did not spend much time during the remainder of his long and productive life without appropriate benefactors. As Claude Gauvard has said, "the true client was less the poet than the prince" (1982, 26; see Poirion 1965, 196 for a similar view). Perhaps surprisingly, Machaut did not enter the service of Jean's heir and son, Charles, newly crowned emperor of Germany. Toward the end of his career, however, Machaut did praise him effusively in the *Prise* (see lines 979–1058 of the present edition), and this indicates that their relations must have been cordial at the least.

And also in the *Prise* (lines 977–8 of the present edition) he mentions that he performed great service for Charles' sister Bonne (Gutha), who was married not long after Crécy to Jean, son of Philippe VI, a man soon to become the next Valois king of France. It is likely, therefore, that he was associated (if only informally) with the provincial court of Jean and Bonne in Normandy. There are indications that the *Remede de Fortune*, the summative *dit* of Machaut's middle age, was composed in her honor and with her as the lightly disguised central character. Bonne, once again lightly disguised, may well be the model for the character Bonneürté (Lady Good Fortune) in the *Jugement Navarre*. All of Guillaume's other patrons play such roles in the narrative *dits*, with the possible exception of Charles, duke of Normandy (later Charles V). In the *Voir Dit* (The True Poem) Machaut avers that Charles is "my sovereign lord" (line 3424 in Leech-Wilkinson and Palmer 1998), but it is not clear that the *Voir Dit* was written in the early 1360s for him. The *Prise* also constitutes something of an exception in this regard. The poem is written in honor of Pierre I, with whose name the poet's is joined in an anagrammatic

puzzle that is Machaut's trademark. But Pierre had been killed some time before the writing of the poem; in fact, the king's untimely death may well have prompted Machaut to memorialize him in such fashion. Thus the poem could hardly have been destined for Pierre, but may have been written for one or several of the Northern French nobles named therein who served with distinction in Pierre's wars against the infidel.

Machaut's association with Bonne was short-lived since she died on September 11, 1349, presumably of the plague then sweeping across northern France.

The opening of the *Jugement Navarre* tells us much of Machaut's activities at the time (See Palmer 1988, 14–23). Resident at home (presumably in Reims), and apparently performing his office of canon, Machaut recounts his melancholic reactions to the outbreak of the disease, foretold by astrological and political signs. Having made a good confession, the poet closes himself up inside his house and stops going to town (a move that may well have saved his life). He describes the various events that attended the attack of the disease: the persecution of the Jews, the appearance of wandering troops of flagellants, the mass burials of victims, the depopulation of the countryside, and desperate economic hardship. The disease at an end, Guillaume finds himself reentering a festive city, tired of burying its dead. The remainder of this work is fictional, a love debate that continues, in a complicated fashion, the one begun a number of years earlier in the *Jugement Behaingne*.

Significantly, the patron who figures in the second judgment poem is Charles, the nineteen-year-old newly crowned king of Navarre (the official coronation took place in Pamplona on June 27, 1350). Charles was the eldest son of Jeanne, queen of Navarre, who had inherited the kingdom from her parents, and Philippe, count of Evreux. Chroniclers at the time and modern historians usually refer to Charles as the king of Navarre (the customary epithet "the Bad" was given him by a Spanish writer in the century following his death). Yet this interesting and complex person, whose career became so connected to the important political developments of the age, was thoroughly French in culture and interests. He may more profitably be considered, as count of Evreux and the investee of other important properties, especially in the north of France, one of the great feudal vassals of the kingdom rather than a foreign potentate. Much the same, in fact, may be said of Pierre I of Cyprus, who was connected by blood and political ties to the great families of France. In fact, both young men were shrewd, dashing, charismatic, and attractive to young ladies, qualities that impressed the clerkly poet who was to compose works in their honor.

It seems probable that Machaut came to enjoy Charles' patronage through his brother Jean. Jean de Machaut followed Guillaume as secretary to Jean of Bohemia, but after the king's death passed into the service of Yolande of Flanders, brother-in-law to Charles of Navarre (see Earp 1995, 28–30). The brothers were close, and Jean must have become well acquainted with Charles, who would have been eager to meet his man's

well-known brother. Patron and, to a much lesser extent, poet became embroiled in the turbulent political events of the late 1350s. Machaut's *Confort d'ami* was written for Charles while he was imprisoned by Jean II for plotting the king of France's overthrow. While the poem offers Charles religious and philosophical consolation for his ill fortune, it is also a public affirmation of the king of Navarre's importance, as well as of the noted poet's support for him. The work was certainly intended to reach readers other than Charles himself; the poem's second half, moreover, contains advice on effective kingship and testifies that Machaut was expecting Charles to assume a position of leadership in a time of ongoing civil unrest and insecurity. One further document, recording the gift of a horse from Charles to Guillaume, may indicate that Machaut continued his relationship with Charles even after the latter lost his chance to challenge seriously for the French crown. Significantly, Machaut decided to include the *Confort*, despite its provocative, even dangerous political themes, in the omnibus manuscripts whose copying and compilation he directed during the last two decades of his life.

After *Confort* Machaut never mentions Charles of Navarre again in any of his narrative poems. Guillaume's career during this period demonstrates that the contractual relationship of patron and prince was flexible. Still attached to the king of Navarre, Machaut also became associated with a nobleman who, at least politically, would have been Charles' mortal enemy. This was Jean, duke of Berry, Navarre's brother-in-law and cousin and the third son of Jean II of France, born November 30, 1340, and therefore about forty years Machaut's junior and a very young man indeed when Machaut became associated with him at the end of the 1350s. His other brothers became important figures in late fourteenth-century politics: Charles V, who reigned over France from 1364–1380; Louis, duke of Anjou; and Philippe, duke of Burgundy. Jean was satisfied to let his brothers occupy the center stage of public life. He became embroiled in political struggle and conflict only as a mature person and quite likely with no little reluctance.

Machaut also suffered during this extended period of foreign war and civil unrest. The poet spent the winter of 1359–60 in a Reims besieged by the English and was even required, despite his age, to do some military service. In the spring of 1360, the French were required by the treaty of Brétigny to supply hostages in return for the release of the imprisoned King Jean, whose huge ransom his subjects were having difficulty raising. One of these was the king's youngest son, Jean of Berry. Apparently in the duke's service, though he had not yet severed ties with Charles, who was now the quite openly bitter enemy of the Valois, Machaut wrote a poem of consolation for Jean, just as he had done for the king of Navarre. In fact, the two works share many elements in common, although they manifest substantial differences as well. Most important, the *Fonteinne amoureuse* (The Fountain of Love) offers a traditional love fiction instead of the political admonitions and instructive exempla drawn from the Bible that figure so prominently in the work composed a

few years earlier for Charles of Navarre. In this poem, the poet/narrator seeks out the young nobleman who, he has learned, appreciates his work and often asks about him; after becoming acquainted, the pair become fast friends and share a dream vision that soothes the sorrow of the nobleman apprehensive about separating from his beloved. The work enjoyed an immense popularity and exerted a profound influence on two young poets, Geoffrey Chaucer and Jean Froissart. In Jean of Berry, Machaut acquired the patronage and favor of the age's most avid aesthete, an aristocrat with catholic desires for the beautiful and exotic who never hesitated to spend all of his vast resources in satisfying them. Machaut's association with the duke was perhaps much the same as the poet had enjoyed with Charles of Navarre; he served neither man as he had served the king of Bohemia, in whose household he was a constant and intimate presence.

Instead, the poet apparently remained resident for the most part in Reims, which was not part of the territory administered by Jean. Reims was one of the most important cities of the kingdom, and the poet must have participated in a number of important public events, including the coronation of Charles V on May 19, 1364. Among Charles' entourage was Pierre of Lusignan and Cyprus, who was then visiting the courts of Europe in hopes of raising money and enlisting volunteers for a great crusade against the Saracens. This is the expedition Machaut later reports with considerable detail in the *Prise* (lines 839–1621 of the present edition). Pierre was engaging in one tournament after another throughout Europe when Jean, appointed leader of the crusade, suddenly died. After attending the coronation of his son, Pierre then assumed secular leadership of the crusade. This famous knight, perhaps the most accomplished jouster of the age, must have reminded Machaut of his beloved Jean of Bohemia, a man whose chivalric achievements the poet, significantly enough, recalls in the *Prise*.

Pierre's stay in Reims was brief, but he did spend about a month immediately thereafter in Paris. It seems very likely that king and poet did, in fact, become somewhat closely acquainted since Machaut's *Dit de la Marguerite* (The Tale of the Daisy) apparently celebrates the romance between the charming young man and a French lady of that name. It is not impossible that Machaut accompanied Pierre on his travels through the lands of Eastern Europe with which the poet had become well acquainted during his several expeditions there as a young man accompanying king Jean of Bohemia. Interestingly, the *Prise*'s account of Pierre's movements during this latter part of his European sojourn are much more detailed than the more general description of the king's tour through France, the Low Countries, and England (more predictably, Froissart gives a fuller account of these earlier travels). Perhaps poet and patron became better acquainted on this long road. In any event, a striking illumination accompanies the *Marguerite* in MS BN 1584, the most authoritative of the Machaut omnibus manuscripts which was likely pre-

pared under the poet's personal supervision. The illumination shows a handsome man, with a crown of gold atop his head, kneeling before a beautiful woman. This image can hardly represent anyone but Pierre, as textual and other further evidence confirms (Earp 1995; Wimsatt 1970; Fourrier 1979). Though the matter is far from settled, the scholarly consensus is that this poem (and another on closely related themes) is indeed occasional and was meant to please Pierre of Cyprus, who plays therein (if by proxy) the role of the ardent lover.

There may have been yet another point of contact between the king and the poet, who was, it is important to remember, perhaps the age's most famous musical composer. As Dzelzainis (1985) points out, when Pierre arrived at the papal court in Avignon, he found himself in a center of artistic and, particularly, musical activity. It is likely that at this time he engaged a number of musicians from Northern France; their names appear in a supplication he sent on their behalf to Pope Urban V in 1363. Machaut may have himself been engaged to compose some pieces in Pierre's honor. His musicians were certainly an accomplished group; Charles V presented them with eighty golden francs as a reward for their services during Pierre's stay in Paris in 1364 (see Iorga 1896 for further discussion). As in the case of architecture, there is strong evidence of a close link between musical practice in Cyprus and the development of the discipline in France. The most important witness to this link is a Franco-Cypriot repertory now housed in the Biblioteca Nazionale (see Hoppin 1957 for a full discussion of the repertory and the history to which it perhaps bears witness).

This poet-musician/patron relationship perhaps explains, at least in part, why Machaut decided to write the young man's biography. The work was undoubtedly intended, in part, as an homage of a different kind, for the forty or so French nobles (many from northern France) who fought with Pierre and are mentioned in the *Prise* by name; these noblemen and their families might well have been the poem's first reading public. Interestingly, however, the historical record hints that Machaut may have been responding to a more personal motive, not just admiration for the accomplishments of Pierre and his French supporters, many of whom Machaut must have known directly. The French culture that flourished during the fourteenth century in Cyprus had particularly strong connections to Machaut's native Champagne. Many of those who had followed Gui de Lusignan in settling the island, beginning at the end of the twelfth century, had come from this region of northern France. A modern historian observes of Cypriot culture that the period from 1250–1350 has "as its principal characteristic a strong influence from Champagne, the result, it seems, of the presence of Alice of Champagne, wife of Hugues I and also of the numerous families from Champagne established in Cyprus. . . . The monuments of this period are the most beautiful and most pure, worthy of their French models. The most remarkable is the cathedral of Famagusta which . . . recalls the cathedral

at Reims" (Longnon 1929, 184–5). (See Boase and Megaw 1977 for further detailed discussion of the Franco-Cypriot connections in ecclesiastical and military architecture.)

Among those Cypriot families of French origin, it is quite possible that Machaut's own was represented. Leontios Makhairas, a Greek chronicler of the island's history during the reign of Pierre and his successors, records that among the island's notables were Thomas Machaut, who is mentioned as a knight resident in the island in 1375, and Bartholomew Machaut, who served as sheriff in 1376 (Dawkins 1932, 563, 570–1). Both Thomas and Bartholomew Machaut appear as well in a catalog of Cypriot knights for the year 1375 in the chronicle of Strambaldi (Mas Latrie 1891, II: 238). Bartholomew is also mentioned in the chronicle of Amadi (Mas Latrie 1891, I: 483). Whether these Frenchmen were simply countrymen of the famous poet or indeed members of his family we will likely never know since the surname *de Machaut* is ambiguous in this regard. It is evident, however, that Cypriot society at the time was connected to the poet's birthplace (a small town), as well as, more generally, to his native Champagne.

Machaut hints in the *Prise* that he is unsure whether he would live to complete it, but against all odds he did. Such doubts apparently lie behind his decision to include early in the work what was intended to be the closing anagram containing the names of poet and dead patron who is its subject (see lines 229–258 of the present edition for the first occurrence of the anagram, which also closes the work in lines 8884–7). In any event, the *Prise* became the crowning achievement, especially for the times, of an incredibly lengthy and productive artistic career.

The records of the canonical chapter reveal that Guillaume de Machaut died in April 1377, and was interred alongside his brother Jean, who had died some five years before. In the second of two balades composed to honor his dead friend, mentor, and perhaps uncle, Eustache Deschamps observes:

> O flower of the very flowers of melody,
> So sweet master of such great talent,
> O Guillaume, the earthly god of harmony,
> After your works, who will be thought the best
> Of all composers? Surely, I don't know who.
> Your name will be a precious relic,
> For in France and Artois the death
> Of Machaut the noble poet will be deeply mourned.
> (De Queux de St. Hilaire and Gaston, I: 243–6)

Even more fitting, perhaps, was the indirect tribute paid to him by poets, both lyric and narrative, as well as by musical composers who continued to be deeply influenced by his work well into the next century.

ARTISTIC ACHIEVEMENT

Long neglected as the work of an inferior author who could do little more than imitate the monuments of an earlier age, the narrative poetry of Guillaume de Machaut has been reevaluated in recent years. As scholars have come to appreciate the complex tradition in which he worked, Machaut has appeared increasingly to be its master (see Earp 1995, 195–203, for the best overview of work on the poetry and 277–89 for a similar overview of work on the music). The fourteenth-century *dit* permitted enormous variety in subject matter and treatment, not just the stale recycling of motifs derived from the tradition of the *Romance of the Rose*: themes (love, adventure, the battle between the sexes), characters (the unsatisfied lover, the remote lady he adores), and also narrative patterns (the unsmooth path of romance leading to a triumphal accommodation presided over by an appropriate divinity such as Venus).

To be sure, the *dits* of Machaut and contemporaries such as Deschamps, Christine, and Froissart most often depend on fictional cadres derived from the vast tradition of conventional love narrative. This tradition provided the formative literary background of poets and patrons alike. Yet fourteenth-century practice was flexible enough to accommodate materials more properly thought of as autobiographical, historical, or moralistic than literary in the strict sense (see Cerquiglini 1988 for a full account). In fact, the more accomplished works within this late medieval genre stage an engaging interplay between what we might, somewhat roughly, term realistic and fictional elements. Machaut's *Jugement Navarre*, for example, begins with autobiographical reminiscences and a chronicle-like description of the plague's outbreak in 1349, only to abandon the tribulations of the real for transparently fictional personification allegory. Much of the poem's precious charm derives from the fiction's sudden and humorous intrusion into the grim world of historical mischance, one result of which is a hopelessly blurred distinction between these two ways of representing human experience. Is the challenge to Machaut's poetic authority mounted within the fiction of that poem "true," an element of fact as solid as the epidemic and the author's miraculous survival? Or is it simply a literary convenience, the pretext that allows the poet to recycle the evidently popular elements of an earlier work and transform in very untraditional fashion his fictional alter ego into the main character? The poem neither encourages nor allows the reader to choose between these quite distinct alternatives.

Similarly, Machaut opens his otherwise archly realistic account of King Pierre's career as an "athlete of Christ" with a pseudo-mythological version of the hero's birth. Pierre comes into this world when the gods, after an appropriate harangue by Mars, decide that a new man is needed to carry on the burden of prosecuting the holy war against the enemies of God. Abandoning the games "meant for those inclined to romance," they act in concert to create him. The story's opening is consciously self-reflexive as well, for Machaut, like the gods he here invokes,

is also abandoning the subject of romance for a more serious theme. Endowed with extraordinary virtue and nourished by divine nurses and guardians, Pierre is destined to attempt the recovery for Christendom of the sacred places that are the heritage of Godfrey of Bouillon (to whom he was, incidentally, distantly related). In this way, the birth of Cyprus's most famous monarch is connected to one of the themes most prominent in crusading propaganda of the period: the obligation to restore Godfrey's inheritance to its rightful possessor, for Pierre was upon reaching maturity to inherit the title of king of Jerusalem as the latest in the line of the famous crusader.

Godfrey, of course, is himself a chivalric inheritor since he is the latest of the "nine worthies," the principal heroes from classical and Christian tradition, who are briefly and appropriately cataloged by Mars. This motif is a topos, or literary commonplace, in heroic narrative of the period and is not of ancient origin. Put into the mouth of the god who is to become Pierre's divine father, it is handled with some finesse and originality by Machaut (see the note to lines 44–66 for references to further discussion of this literary tradition). The mythological birth topos is not a Machaut invention either, but has a source that could scarcely be more different. The heroes of ancient epic (Hercules, Achilles, Aeneas, among others) are often the products of unions that are divine in some sense. Machaut's account, however, is closely modeled not on epic narrative, but on a similar episode from Alanus de Insulis's scholarly yet occasionally humorous Latin treatise, *Anticlaudianus*. This twelfth-century Neoplatonic allegory uses personifications to dramatize the various stages of human development that result in the birth of a "new man." Machaut likely expected that the more learned among his readers would recognize and appreciate his surprising appropriation of Alanus, for he was one of the age's most popular and most frequently quoted philosophical authors (see Bossuat 1955 for Latin text and details). Machaut made particular use of verses 1–269 of Book I, but the fabrication of the "new man" is the poem's main theme throughout. Such readers would also have appreciated, perhaps, that Venus/Aphrodite was associated in antiquity with the island of Cyprus; that Venus was also the mother of Aeneas, Western Europe's most noted hero (and likewise the recipient of a divinely ordained inheritance to be won by arduous and bloody war in a promised foreign land); and that Venus, who makes an appearance in the *Voir Dit* to oversee the poet's love affair, now is called upon, like the poet himself, to play instead an epical, historical role. No doubt, the opening of the *Prise* is a literary tour de force that resonates on a number of levels: political, literary, genealogical, mythographic, and intertextual. Additionally, this bravura account of Pierre's birth anticipates or perhaps is in some sense a source of one of the century's most intriguing mixtures of startling, often outlandish fiction with dynastic history (including accounts of crusading against the infidel). The *Roman de Mélusine* (The Story of Melusine) of Jean d'Arras (composed about 1393) offers a sweeping account of the rise and growing ascendance of Pierre's family, the house

of Lusignan (for further discussion see the various essays collected in Maddox and Sturm-Maddox 1996).

Machaut certainly enjoys his play with this confection of borrowed elements, whose centerpiece, making use of astrological metaphor, involves Nature's effecting a "conjunction" between Mars and Venus. In this way, Pierre can have as his parental inheritance the strengths (but also presumably the weaknesses) of the divinities of love and war. His mythological origins hint that Pierre will be warlike and fond of ladies, but, perhaps, also ferociously single-minded and subject to destructive lust. As Machaut well knew, Pierre indeed earned the admiration of contemporaries because of his unremitting aggression against those he saw as the enemies of God. His charm and good looks made him a favorite with women (so testifies Machaut's Marguerite poetry), including a wife for whom he felt a strongly sensual attachment, though this did not prevent him from taking a number of mistresses, a fault about which his admiring biographer remains silent. But Pierre also suffered the consequence of these twin passions for love and war. He died young, murdered by his peers because they had been sorely tried and impoverished by his adventurism and arrogance, even as they resented his extramarital exploits and disrespectful treatment of Cypriot women. The favored child of Venus eventually endured the ultimate insult to his "divine" inheritance, the penis hacked off his corpse by one of his most trusted lieutenants, Jacques de Nores. Brought to conspire against the man he had served faithfully for many years by the king's increasingly outrageous and aggressive behavior, Nores is reported to have said "With this thing you killed your own people" ("per queste ti ha morto la tua gente" from the *Chronique d'Amadi*, Mas Latrie 1891, 426). The comment of Nores offers an ironic perspective on both aspects of Pierre's aggressive desire, even as it points to his consequent failings as a monarch.

The ultimate tragedy of Pierre's life, however, is only hinted at in the poem's opening section. Machaut's tone here is more slyly ironic than serious. So that his readers will not miss the pseudo-autobiographical humor, the narrator comments in line 108 that "I don't know if you think this a fable." In other words, the poet injects here, as he does in the *Jugement Navarre*, a tantalizing ambiguity about what we would now call the "truth value" of his composition. Are we to see more in his allegory than authorial charm and wit? We cannot be sure. Thus, even the *Prise* is not free from the precious literariness, the sophisticated connectedness with other texts, and the slippery referencing of the "real world" that are such common and distinguishing features of Machaut's love vision narrative (see further the discussion in Leech-Wilkinson and Palmer 1998, lxxix–lxxxii, of Machaut's borrowing from the popular *Ovide moralisé* [Ovid Moralized] in the *Voir Dit*).

Machaut's work in the *dit* reflects the genre's vitality and diversity. His twelve long and short *dits amoureux* probe the conventions and assumptions of a literary tradition that in Machaut's time had dominated French culture for two centuries. And, though they each contain brief passages

that recall this tradition, both the *Confort* and the *Prise* strike out in quite different directions. With its intention to console and advise a troubled young ruler, the *Confort* is much more indebted to the scholarly tradition of *regimen principum* or "education of rulers," whose most famous example was penned by St. Thomas Aquinas (as it happens, for one of Pierre's illustrious predecessors). The *Prise*, in turn, connects to two related vernacular genres of the period: the knightly chronicle, its popularity extended by Froissart when he breathed new life into the work of Jean Le Bel; and the aristocratic biography such as Chandos Herald's *La Vie du Prince Noir*, which extols the military triumphs of one of the period's most noted warrior nobles, England's Black Prince (see Pope and Lodge 1910 for text and details; *Prince Noir* was written about 1385). It is perhaps best to regard the aristocratic biography as simply a more specialized type of chronicle, especially since it is often difficult or pointless in practice to distinguish among the three main genres of history writing in the period—chronicles, annals, and histories (see Guénée 1973 for further discussion on this point). In what follows, I shall be assuming that Machaut intended to write a verse chronicle like the numerous others then extant, some of which he undoubtedly knew. The *Prise* is essentially, then, an extended verse narrative extolling the martial exploits and pursuit of honor of a notable aristocratic warrior and those among his entourage (I find the view of Lanoue 1985, that Machaut intended to write an epic in the tradition of Virgil, Lucan, and Statius, interesting, but not persuasive).

Just a few years after completing his most elaborate *dit amoureus*, the *Voir Dit* or "True Poem," Machaut suddenly abandoned this type of composition, with its complex mix of verse narrative, lyric poems, and prose letters. Perhaps he concluded that he could hardly improve on the work that modern critics consider his masterpiece. Even so, this does not explain why he then devoted considerable time and energy to researching and writing something entirely different from everything he had previously attempted. This radical shift at the end of a long and distinguished career raises a question difficult to answer definitively. Why did the most notable practitioner of poetry in the tradition of the *Romance of the Rose* abandon the subject matter and themes he had cultivated with success for as long as perhaps four decades? As I have noted earlier, Machaut may well have had personal reasons to take up this subject, not only his relationship with Pierre, but, perhaps, family connections in Cyprus and a numerous body of potentially noble patrons eager to have their exploits recounted by the age's most notable poet. However, it is difficult to believe that so consummate an artist as Machaut would have taken his career in a new and unexpected direction without more specifically literary considerations. His poems often contain valuable autobiographical indications and sometimes offer explanations (though these themselves can be "fictionalized") of what has brought them into being. Unfortunately, the *Prise d'Alixandre* furnishes no such explanation, though it does at several

points record the poet's deep admiration for Pierre's accomplishments (see, for example, lines 8840–8869 of the present edition).

An answer, though it is hardly definitive, may perhaps be found in the changing literary tastes of the period, especially as these were shaped and satisfied by Jean Froissart, Machaut's younger contemporary. It is perhaps not insignificant that Froissart himself experienced what Peter Dembowski calls a "midlife crisis" that led him to redesign his poetic career (see Dembowski 1983 for full details). Froissart spent his early years as a writer imitating in a skillful and often strikingly original fashion love poetry in the various genres popularized by Machaut. These include the dream allegory vision, with a strong autobiographical or subjective element; lyrics in the so-called *formes fixes* or traditional fixed forms such as the lai, virelay, and rondeau; and narratives with embedded lyrics and expertly retold exempla drawn from Ovid. In his *Joli Buisson de Jonece* (The Pretty Bush of Love, composed in 1373), however, Froissart says farewell to this type of poetry, to the way of life that it reflects and its underlying values. He would never take up this subject matter and or its themes again except in the quite different context of *Meliador*. In fact, his renunciation can be traced to a change of literary interest some years before he wrote the *Joli Buisson*. Abandoning the self-enclosed literary world of allegorical characters and refined emotions for the intriguing spectacle of contemporary chivalry, Froissart began and then gave up the composition of a work in verse, now lost, which is devoted to great heroes and martial accomplishments from the period 1325–1369. This material was later reworked into the more famous prose version originally intended for Robert de Namur. Over the next decades (Froissart was apparently still working on a redaction at the time of his death around 1404), the poet turned historian expanded and revised what would become the *Chroniques*, and these soon attained a great popularity that continues to the present day.

As did Machaut in composing a poetic vita of Pierre, Froissart worked less from written sources and much more from eyewitness accounts that he solicited or received directly from those involved in the events. These encounters with informants are often mentioned in the text, much as Machaut does in the case of the *Prise* (see lines 5937–42 of the present edition for Machaut's reference to the reporting of Jean of Reims; lines 8017–8022, 8213, 8433, and 8825 for similar references to information given the poet by Gautier of Conflans; both these Frenchmen served Pierre). Not content with treating the themes of an ideal chivalry through his account of the continuing war between the French and English, Froissart even revived the genre of Arthurian verse romance. No one had written such a romance for a century. The result was *Meliador*, an elaborate narrative of more than 30,000 verses that limns the complex connections between worthiness in the pursuit of arms and success in love (and Figg and Palmer 2001 for a partial translation and further discussion of these issues).

Though the direction of literary influence is usually seen as flowing from the older Machaut to the younger Froissart, it may well have been the latter's early work in verse chronicle during the end of the 1360s that prompted his erstwhile master to attempt something of the same. This hypothesis assumes that Froissart's verse chronicle and, perhaps, an early redaction of *Meliador*, were in circulation and became known to Machaut before he decided to write the *Prise*. Work on the *Prise* was begun most probably during the period immediately following Pierre's assassination in January 1369, and took at least two to three years to complete.

In any case, it can hardly be coincidence that the two most noted poets in northern France of this period should have both abandoned, at about the same time and after much success, working in the tradition of the *Rose* so that they could devote themselves to chronicling the "real" heroes of the contemporary chivalric life and, in Froissart's case, also to reviving a chivalric poetic tradition that had died out a century before. We have no record that the two poets ever met, and no direct indication from Froissart that he considered Machaut his literary model. But the poetic record clearly attests to Froissart's reverent imitation of Machaut. And it may well be, even in the absence of explicit testimony, that the *Prise* reflects the shift in subject matter inaugurated by Froissart, with the literary influence thus running in both directions.

The subject that Machaut chose (or which chose him) certainly epitomized the secular values Froissart was intent on celebrating; the wars between France and England that are the latter's chief subject furnished no hero of comparable stature, not even the French Bertrand du Guesclin or the English Black Prince. It is no exaggeration to say that Pierre was the most famous knight of the age, his reputation established by his spectacular career in tournaments and then by his masterminding of an improbably spectacular military conquest, the seizing of the known world's richest and most exotic city. In addition, the Cypriot king's unquestioned devotion to holy war made him even easier to idealize in an age with a taste for mystical militancy. Machaut's life of Pierre, with its strongly religious chivalric ideal, anticipates such later works as Philippe de Mézières's *Songe du Vieil Pelerin* (Dream of the Aged Pilgrim), which was composed for Charles VI of France in hopes of channeling the young man's energies toward regaining the Holy Land rather than contending with the English.

A crusader himself of unquestioned Christian zeal, Philippe de Mézières, in fact, may inadvertently have influenced Machaut to write a poem in praise of Pierre. If Froissart showed his fellow poet the virtues of chivalry as a theme, Philippe perhaps provided him with his subject. The inveterate crusader and religious propagandist was certainly one of the principal participants in the events Machaut therein recounted, as a modern historian (Delaville Le Roulx 1886, 123n) suggests: "Philippe de Mézières is one of the most sympathetic figures in the history of Cyprus; his devotion to its kings, his desire to save the Orient from the infidels never dimin-

ished during his long career." But Philippe was not only a principal actor in the events Machaut was later to recount; he was also Pierre's first ardent publicist (for a full discussion of the crusader's role in Pierre's wars see Iorga 1896, on which the following brief summary is based).

Born in Amiens in 1327, Philippe studied as a young man with the canons there and, although he showed considerable intellectual talents, decided soon afterward to join the crusading expedition of Humbert II, dauphin of Vienne, which was directed against the city of Smyrna. After a battle on that campaign, Philippe was knighted. He remained in the Near East even after Humbert's return to France, making a pilgrimage to Jerusalem and there conceiving the idea of founding a new military order, the Order of the Passion. This order, he thought, would solve the Christian problem of reconquering and holding the Holy Land. Eventually, he made his way to Cyprus and formed a lifelong association with young Pierre, perhaps influencing him to found his own military order, the Order of the Sword. In Cyprus, he worked closely with the papal legate, Peter de Thomas or Peter Thomas, and apparently experienced an intense spiritual awakening through his association with this saintly man, himself an ardent supporter of the crusade who eagerly anticipated the overthrow of Islamic control over the Holy Land. Ascending to the throne after the death of his father, Hugues IV, Pierre determined on a series of military campaigns, including the attack on Alexandria. In these initiatives, he was strongly supported by Peter Thomas and Mézières, who had become chancellor of Cyprus at Pierre's coronation. Brokenhearted by what he viewed as the premature abandonment of Alexandria after its seizure on October 10, 1365, Peter Thomas died not long afterward in Famagusta, on January 6, 1366.

Mézières was inspired by the legate's death to write his life, in hopes of arguing for his beatification, which was not ratified (he is venerated as a saint in his order—the Carmelites—but has never been canonized by the Roman Catholic Church). According to his own testimony, he began composition a month or two after Peter Thomas's death. He finished the work not long afterward (for the full text see Smet 1954; the Bollandist version published in the *Acta Sanctorum* derives from a manuscript that is lacking several essential elements, including the petition for canonization authored by Pierre I and delivered to the pope during the king's final visit to the west in 1368). Though the *Vita* is ostensibly a life of Peter Thomas, it is also to a large extent a panegyric to the king of Cyprus whom Philippe served faithfully. Like the legate, Pierre is, in Philippe's portrait, a man dedicated from his early years to the service of God and the restoration of the Holy Land. The following passage exemplifies Philippe's view of Pierre:

> Yet Peter, king of Jerusalem and Cyprus, from his youth did eagerly desire the liberation of his paternal heritage, the kingdom of Jerusalem, as well as the liberation of the Holy City and its cleansing, proposing in his heart that if it ever might come about through God

> that the scepter of Cyprus should be his he would devote his own person, riches, and kingdom to the conquest of the Holy Land (Smet 1954, 102; translation mine).

After or perhaps during the writing of the *Vita*, Philippe set out for Europe in the hopes of renewing interest there in the prosecution of the crusade. It was there that the work was initially circulated. Based in the royal city of Reims and associating regularly with the higher nobility, Guillaume de Machaut quite probably learned of and read the *Vita* at that time. It might well be one of the sources eventually used by the poet in the composition of his own account of the capture of Alexandria, as certain details suggest. Consider, among a number of parallels, the account of the expedition's return to Cyprus (lines 3615–3632 of the present edition). In Machaut's version of the voyage, the fleet is threatened by a storm that divides the victorious ships. With its emphasis on divine displeasure and meteorological chastisement, the account recalls the corresponding passage in the *Vita*. An interesting and detailed point of contact between the two versions is Machaut's unusual use in line 3637 of the Latinism *fortune* in its two meanings of "fortune" and "storm." Similarly, the narrator in the *Vita* says "Tantam *fortunam* in mari miscuit quod omnia navigia nostra divisit," while the legate comments "Ista *fortuna* est Dei vindicta" (emphasis mine). Thus, the two meanings of *fortuna* are equally invoked in the *Vita* as well.

If Machaut was aware of Mézières's version of the capture of Alexandria (a good part of the *Vita* is devoted to this subject), then perhaps this explains, somewhat paradoxically, one of the most puzzling aspects of the *Prise*: the omission of any mention of Mézières, though he was for decades Pierre's chancellor and chief advisor. This omission is especially ironic since it was Philippe whose organizational efforts made possible the assembly of an army of European recruits after Pierre's attempts to enlist the nobility had met with scant success (see Smet 1954, 119–124 for details). The group of the faithful, the "fidelos quosquos" who sailed with Pierre to Rhodes, were assembled, Philippe states, "sine adiutorio alicuius principis vel communitatis Christianorum," that is, without the assistance of any ruler or the community of Christians. Though the chancellor modestly understates his own role, historians agree that it was Mézières and Peter Thomas who recruited the small army of mercenaries at Pierre's direction and with his funds and also made the arrangements for Venetian assistance (see, for example, Delaville Le Roulx 1886, 123–4; Hodgson 1910, 466–9).

Machaut's poem offers such a detailed account of Pierre's various military expeditions that it is often invoked as a reliable source by standard histories of the period (this is the case in Edbury 1991, Iorga 1896, and Hill 1940–52, for example; Delaville Le Roulx 1886 observes of Pierre's expeditions after Alexandria that "Machaut is the chief source for all this period"). Machaut's witness to these events is especially strong in its

inclusion, following the traditions of epic poetry, of long catalogs of the names of those Frenchmen involved, often down to the level of squires. Machaut's accuracy is confirmed indirectly by other sources, particularly Froissart's *Chroniques*, because many of the same knights were active in the European campaigns that Machaut's contemporary recounts. The *Prise*, it is true, displays a certain degree of chauvinism; among Pierre's multinational entourage, it is only those of French blood and language who are usually mentioned by name, though there are notable exceptions made, even for the Saracens. The narrator, in fact, testifies that he knows more details about the participants in these extraordinary events than he has space to record (see, for example, the narrator's comments in lines 4694–6 of the present edition).

Thus, it is surprising, to say the least, that the *Prise* contains no reference to the Frenchman who was most instrumental in helping Pierre organize, against all odds, and lead successfully against the Mamluk enemy a crusading army. It simply cannot be that Machaut, so well informed about every detail of Pierre's accomplishments, did not know of Philippe de Mézières or that he served Pierre as chancellor of the kingdom of Cyprus, perhaps the most important post in his administration. A native of nearby Amiens, Mézières was in Europe at the time of Pierre's murder and in 1373 became one of the councilors of Charles V and tutor to the future Charles VI. Like Machaut, he was appalled by Pierre's murder and inveighed against the king's brothers Jean and Jacques, who were implicated in the plotting that led up to it. After Pierre's murder and the death of Peter Thomas, in fact, Mézières became the leading and most famous exponent of holy war and the very chivalric values that the *Prise* takes such pains to celebrate. He was never to forget his years with Pierre of Cyprus and even penned in 1389–90 a lengthy meditation on, among other subjects, the expedition against Alexandria; the *Oratio Tragica* was intended to generate interest in the then projected crusade (see Smet 1954 and Iorga 1896 for further details).

Why did Machaut choose to ignore Philippe de Mézières? Because both writers were supporters and admirers of Pierre, it cannot be for political or ideological reasons. Machaut shared with the younger crusader/propagandist a firm belief in traditional chivalric values and the importance of a militant Christian defense against Islamic threat. Both were thoroughly French in outlook and culture, even sharing a clerkly interest in learning and literature (like a number of Machaut's secular *dits*, the *Songe du Vieil Pelerin* makes use of a dream framework and personification allegory). It may be, therefore, that Machaut envied Philippe's early accomplishment in writing a stirring account of Pierre's military achievements and then taking a strong role in advocating canonization of the expedition's papal legate. This advocacy was furthered by Pierre of Cyprus himself; so attests the letter from the king to the Holy See that is appended to what Smet determines is the best manuscript of the *Vita*. With its strong focus on Pierre to the complete exclusion of

Philippe and only brief mention of Peter Thomas (see lines 3507–3538 of the present edition), the *Prise* offers an alternative version of these events, one in which the place of secular values and power is more prominent.

This is certainly what one might expect of a poet who, though a clerk, had spent his life serving and entertaining a succession of grand nobles. If Machaut understood Mézières as in a double sense a competitor (an author rivaling him, a crusader rivaling Pierre), then we can perhaps understand the otherwise puzzling omission of France's most famous crusader from the *Prise*. To have included him would have called attention to the role of Mézières as celebrant of chivalric accomplishment and noteworthy soldier of Christ. Machaut, perhaps, did not wish to take attention away either from the accomplishments of Pierre or from his own admirable efforts in publicizing them.

The Cyprus of Pierre's birth was a kingdom made prosperous by its role in the most profitable international commerce of the period, the East-West trade in luxury goods for which, after the fall of Acre, the island became an important entrepôt (the historical account that here follows is based on Edbury 1991, Hill 1940–52, Iorga 1896, and Atiya 1938). Pierre's father, Hugues IV, did his best to foster the mercantile economy of Cyprus, which meant mostly following a policy of peaceful coexistence with his Muslim neighbors and trading partners. To a large extent, Hugues's governance represented a substantial break from the past. As George Hill remarks, "Hugh's reign was distinguished from those of his predecessors and successors by the fact that his Kingdom was less seriously and directly concerned in war" (1940–52, 298). Hugues did his best to avoid Cypriot involvement in the crusading against the infidel in which, as successor to the kingdom of Jerusalem, he had a personal and dynastic stake. He did attempt to strengthen his claim through the marriage of his eldest son Gui to Mary of Bourbon, thus allying himself to the French royal house. But he only participated sporadically in military efforts against those who now occupied his heritage and even turned down the gift of the Armenian citadel Gorhigos, which would have provided a useful base for operations against them.

Pierre, in contrast, was a throwback in his political vision, preferring a policy of more or less continual war against the Turks and Saracens. As a young man, Pierre apparently underwent a mystical experience at the Church of the Holy Cross in Stavrovouni, where the voice of the resurrected Jesus directed him to regain his lost heritage and rescue the Holy Land from its Saracen occupiers. Perhaps not long afterward (the date is disputed by scholars), he founded a military fraternity, the Order of the Sword, whose explicit goal was the liberation of the Christian east. Even more noteworthy, however, was the attempt that Pierre and his younger brother Jean made to escape the apparently tyrannical rule of their father and journey to the Latin west. Contemporary chroniclers are silent about the motives of the young men, but it seems likely that they were interested in discovering if there was some support for a crusade in a Europe whose glamour also attracted them. Hugues sent two galleys after his

wayward sons, who were captured and returned home (the older knight who abetted their escape was tortured and killed). Pierre and Jean were imprisoned for some time and then released. They were, however, deprived of the opportunity or the resources for further flight. These three noteworthy episodes of Pierre's youth are developed at some length in the *Prise*, with an appropriate emphasis on the fervor of Pierre's calling to Christian militancy and what he considered his divine election to lead a renewed expedition to regain the Holy Land.

Pierre was thirty years old when Hugues died in 1359, but had already been crowned king of Cyprus some months before because his father foresaw some opposition to this succession. Pierre's older brother Gui had not survived his father, but his son Hugues believed (as did others) than he had a better claim to the throne (for further detailed discussion see the explanatory note to lines 612–18). Upon the death of Hugues, Pierre was crowned king of Jerusalem, in an impressive ceremony in Famagusta cathedral, where the papal legate Peter Thomas anointed Pierre and his wife Eleanor of Aragon as the monarchical couple on April 5, 1359. His nephew Hugues, who had been made prince of Galilee, raised objections, finding sympathy for his cause from Pope Innocent VI and Jean of France. This trouble required Pierre to dispute envoys who, after some difficulty, were able to satisfy Hugues's supporters. Pierre was required to pay him 50,000 white besants a year to settle the case. Pierre's envoys, however, had been dispatched on other business as well: to make preliminary preparations for the crusade upon which Pierre eventually hoped to embark. Unlike all the other expeditions that had hitherto been launched against the Muslim east, this venture was initiated not by a western monarch or the papacy, but by a Christian leader from the embattled east.

Meanwhile, Pierre was pursuing an aggressive policy that would establish his credentials as a worthy leader of a Christian army. Not long after he ascended to the throne, Pierre was approached by the people of Armenian Gorhigos, who, fearful of falling under Turkish domination, asked him to assume sovereignty over their city. He welcomed the opportunity that his father had refused. This occupation led in the following year to the capture of nearby Adalia and its environs, which the Cypriots then held against strong counterattacks. With these aggressive moves, Pierre aroused the anger of the emir of Damascus; it was the latter's threatening actions that convinced the pope and others that a crusade should be launched in response.

Pierre sailed for Avignon in late 1362, which he reached at the end of March the following year after spending time negotiating with the Venetians and Genoese, the two maritime powers with which Cyprus had an often contentious but profitable relationship. By the time he appeared before the pope (now Urban V, who succeeded Innocent in October 1362), Pierre had settled all outstanding difficulties with these Italian city states, whose support for the crusade was essential. A final treaty with Genoa, however, was concluded only in early 1365, just before the depar-

ture of Pierre for the east. The first order of business at the *curia* was the final settlement of the prince of Galilee's claim to the throne. Jean of France, then present in the city on other business, was supporting some modification of the original agreement, but after some further negotiations it was confirmed and Hugues took an oath of allegiance to his uncle. The prince of Galilee was later to serve with distinction in the crusade (see lines 2293–2306 of the present edition). With Urban's enthusiastic support, Pierre persuaded Jean to take the cross with himself, along with a number of other notables; the cardinal Elie Talleyrand de Périgord was appointed papal legate (see Guillemain 1962 and Housley 1986 for a full discussion of papal policy and involvement).

After taking the cross, Pierre embarked upon a journey throughout the kingdoms of western and eastern Europe with the expressed intention of drumming up support for the venture, though it is probably equally as true that he enjoyed the constant tourneying, feasting, and traveling for their own sakes. This venture lasted two years, perhaps lengthened by the sudden deaths of both Jean and the cardinal in early 1364. It is after attending the coronation of Charles V at Reims that Pierre assumed leadership of the crusade and embarked upon further efforts to encourage support from the nobility and monarchs of Germany and eastern Europe. Though Machaut summarizes briefly the king's travels through France, Flanders, and England, he develops these later expeditions as a continuous narrative in considerable detail and with many precise geographical references.

Pierre returned to Venice in early 1365, discouraged and disconsolate at the lack of actual support he had received, despite many extravagant promises. Fortunately, Peter Thomas (now legate for the crusade) and Philippe de Mézières had assembled a small army and arranged for transportation from the Venetians. Pierre and his entourage embarked for Rhodes with 31 ships, where a large force (108 vessels) arrived from Cyprus. With an appropriate blessing from the legate, the fleet set out on October 4, its destination known only to Pierre and his closest advisors.

The selection of the commercial center of Alexandria as the point of attack has provoked much discussion among modern scholars. Hill 1940–52 suggests that Pierre, once established in Alexandria, could march on Cairo while his fleet blockaded Egypt; additionally, the seizure of the city would deprive the sultan of the main source of his revenue. Such a strategy would hardly have been new, having already been advanced as early as the twelfth century. Edbury 1977, in contrast, questions whether Pierre was a "crusading enthusiast" or had, instead, a "more modest and more practical aim" (91). In other words, he questions whether Pierre, despite what his propagandists Mézières and Machaut declare, really intended to reconquer his heritage in Jerusalem, surely an impractical goal given the slim support to be expected from the western rulers. Marshaling an impressive amount of evidence, he argues that the attack on Alexandria may have been instead a preemptive first strike to achieve a more limited and realizable goal. For the ultimate

security of Cyprus, surrounded by hostile powers, rested on its commercial importance to the western trading states with naval strength (Genoa and Venice, but also Aragon, and Catalonia). If, as seems likely, Alexandria was by 1365 threatening to eclipse the ports of Cyprus as trading centers, then seizing it might enable the Cypriots to regain control of trade in the eastern Mediterranean. If it could not be held, then destroying the city would buy the kingdom some time. A further point, one that Edbury does not make, is that the demonstration of Cypriot power in the Alexandrian campaign might persuade the sultan to conclude a treaty favorable to the island's trading interests. Pierre could thereafter gain by the threat of force what he had been unable to achieve directly with the city's capture. Machaut's version of Pierre's strategic decision is a pleasing fiction. That the king embarked with no idea of a destination and was swayed by the testimony of Perceval of Coulonges is an epic touch in the tradition of the *chanson de geste*, yet another characterization of the noble king who relies, according to the canons of conventional aristocratic virtue, on his trusted counselor.

Whatever Pierre's motive, the city presented a formidable obstacle to the relatively small force that Pierre was able to bring against it. Alexandria had not been attacked successfully for centuries; it was protected by thick walls and well-designed defenses, though the garrison was small. In the event, however, and with no little luck, the force of crusaders managed to defeat a lightly armed party of shore defenders, force open one of the city's huge gates, and eventually kill or drive off the soldiers inside. What followed was an orgy of looting and wanton destruction that lasted for some days. A majority of those in the expeditionary force, however, determined not to mount a defense against a relief force then on its way from Cairo (Pierre had been unable to destroy the bridge over which the sultan's troops would gain access to the city; see lines 2979ff of the present edition). To the bitter disappointment of the king, the Christian army took to their ships and departed to Cyprus with a full load of booty and prisoners (for further discussion of the battle and its aftermath see the explanatory notes to lines 2185–3614 of the present edition). We should note here only that Machaut's account is quite accurate and developed with the small, authentic details that confirm his dependence on eyewitness accounts. There is nothing to equal it in the Cypriot chroniclers, who pass over quite briefly what was undoubtedly the signal event in this period of the island's history (see, for example, the version of Makhairas in Dawkins 1932, 151, 153).

The remaining three or so years of Pierre's reign were occupied with three matters: continuing negotiations over a peace treaty with the sultan; further military action against other Muslim cities and defense of the mainland outposts held by Cypriot garrisons; and the gradual deterioration of Pierre's relations with his brothers and other Cypriot nobles, the result of the king's growing arrogance, self-concern, and vindictiveness against enemies both perceived and actual. Like the Cypriot chroniclers, Machaut offers detailed accounts of all these related events, including

those that hardly contribute to any glorification of Pierre's accomplishments. Pierre could never extort a treaty favorable to Cyprus from the Saracens; outstanding questions between the two powers were to be settled only after his death, during the reign of his son Pierre II. Though he was to launch a number of raids that harassed and humiliated his enemies, none achieved the success of the expedition against Alexandria, which itself had no lasting political consequences and cannot be said to have contributed substantially to a western attempt at *reconquista*. The cost of these expeditions, however, was high, for the fiscal burden they placed on his people, along with the resentment that was felt at his frequent absences from the island, gave rise to the political and personal difficulties that, exacerbated by Pierre's violent temper and arrogance, led, perhaps inexorably, to his murder.

It is no wonder that Pierre's story, with his great accomplishments ending in a dishonorable death, prompted Machaut (and, following him, François Villon as well as Chaucer's monk) to recount this inspiring yet sad tale with a number of references to the Boethian figure of capricious Fortune. There is a certain conventionality in Machaut's portrait of the star-crossed Pierre; as Morton Bloomfield 1975 observes about literary heroes in the later Middle Ages, "there is a Christian sadness about these later protagonists which encourages a kind of fatalism. The heroes or protagonists are victims of fortune, but a fortune modified by redemptive history" (39). The fickle goddess's deceptive bestowal of transitory goods precedes her destruction of those who trust too much to her apparent beneficence, though such characters, like Chaucer's Troilus, may be redeemed by the poet's art. As Machaut notes at the beginning of his tale (lines 123–6), he does not know if Fortune was present at the divine assembly that ordained Pierre's birth, but will make herself known by what she accomplishes for him. The *Prise* certainly makes clear the contradictory influences of Fortune on the life of the warrior king it celebrates. But it is hardly a meditation on this view of human purpose, nor does it transform Pierre into an *exemplum* to illustrate it. Machaut often draws deeply on Boethian ideas to develop his particular version of *fin'amors* in his other *dits* (especially in the *Remede de Fortune*, essentially an adaptation of the honored Latin author to the tradition of the *dit amoureus*). But his invocation of Boethius in the *Prise* is more perfunctory than profound.

If Boethius provides a rough philosophical framework within which Pierre's story could be understood, Machaut's way of recounting his accomplishments is more heavily influenced by a different tradition, that of the aristocratic chronicle, as I have noted briefly above. According to the detailed cultural analysis of this genre presented in Brandt 1966, the essential feature of the aristocratic chronicle is that it is a narrative in which events, "being ordered more or less chronologically were habitually reported in the most elementary relationship to each other." Thus, such a narrative does not concern itself with causality but "aims to cel-

ebrate, not to explain, the action with which it is concerned. An explanation that may occur along the way is never the point of the narrative" (85–88). Hence, the sporadic references to Dame Fortune throughout the *Prise* do not constitute its central theme in the sense that they organize or give significance to the story of Pierre's accomplishments. Instead, the organizing principle of such a narrative is found in character; the aristocratic chronicle locates a line of action in the will of a focused character and then follows it to some conclusion. In the *Prise*, Pierre is given direction, appointed his path to the house of honor as Machaut puts it, by the divine powers who attend his birth and by the voice of Jesus that suddenly issues from the shrine of the Holy Cross. Pierre is to realize that most basic of feudal injunctions: to take possession of the lands that are his by right and protect them from those intent on seizing them.

Though it does not focus on explaining what it recounts, the aristocratic chronicle does not lack "meaning" in the sense that its tales are not infused with values. On the contrary, in these texts "man was instead always considered teleologically, in light of those values and goals he regarded as a kind of immutable definition of proper human behavior" (106). And for Machaut and Froissart, as for the men whose deeds they recounted, that system of values of feudal chivalry was directed toward "the personal honor of the aristocrat" (110).

It is such a focus that distinguishes the *Prise* from the strictly clerical chroniclers who also provide us with information about his reign. Makhairas, Amadi, Strambaldi, and Bustron often relate actions Pierre took that we might properly regard as political, most prominently various disputes with the Venetians and Genovese that Pierre must settle. As Brandt points out, the clerical chronicler "did not see the materials he recorded as constituting a continuum of action. Every new page of the clerical chronicle was potentially, at least, a new beginning; interest, not relevance, was the criterion determining selection" (65). Machaut passes over political events of this kind briefly, if he mentions them at all, because they do not originate in Pierre's will, nor do they concern his pursuit of personal honor.

Such values help us understand what aspects of Pierre's life are omitted and which are emphasized in the poem. There is little mention, for example, of his family, except insofar as his father and brothers enter into Pierre's attempt to carry out his divinely imposed mission; his son, the future Pierre II, appears only in the context of the pointless but bitter quarrel that erupts between Pierre and Henri de Giblet over the possession of some hunting dogs. Only seemingly minor is yet another quarrel, the one between Pierre and Florimont de Lesparre that results in this knight challenging Pierre to individual combat on the field of honor. Even though the agreed-upon confrontation never takes place because Florimont loses his nerve and agrees to papal intercession, Machaut devotes more than five hundred verses (lines 7401–7934 of the present edition)

to the description of the episode, even including three letters that document the dispute (these may well be genuine; see the explanatory note to lines 7490ff for further discussion). Similarly, Machaut recounts in great detail the king of Cyprus's travels to Germany, Austria, and Central Europe in search of support, even though this expedition came ultimately to nothing (lines 839–1552). Perhaps even more surprising is the emphasis given to the expedition sent to prevent the Turkish reoccupation of Gorhigos (lines 4453–5642), for Pierre does not accompany the men who, after an initial setback, manage to inflict a disastrous defeat upon the invaders. Additionally, this episode includes a lengthy catalog of the French knights involved. In fact, except for the conquest of Alexandria and the king's murder, these three sections of the poem are the lengthiest and constitute a considerable percentage of the whole. In all three instances, however, the narrative is developed in order to manifest Pierre's honor, follows a line of action that begins with the king's expressed will.

In the quarrel with Lesparre, Pierre's truthfulness and virtue are challenged. This explains why the king is willing to go to great lengths, even traveling from Cyprus to France, and at great expense, solely for the purpose of clearing his name and restoring his honor. That Pierre agrees after fervent exhortation over a period of weeks to the pope's brokered offer of a public apology from Lesparre over which he will personally preside demonstrates that his pridefulness can be properly tempered by mercy and his devotion to religion (the reconciliation takes place during the Easter season). The restless journeying from one royal court to the next illustrates yet another virtue, Pierre's perseverance, even as it testifies to the high honor in which he is held by others of the most exalted rank. And the expedition to Gorhigos proceeds from Pierre's will to preserve his territory, the armed force he assembles and commands an extension of royal resolve. If absent in the flesh, Pierre is present by proxy as the monarch whose honor has been offended and must be exonerated. In this instance, Machaut may have been serving another purpose as well. Though in writing the *Prise* his patron was ostensibly Pierre, the fact that the king of Cyprus was dead likely meant that some other, living patrons were also in view, most probably one or more of the French knights celebrated in this episode (see Tyson 1986 for a discussion of the connection between chronicles and patrons; her conclusion is that one of the former is seldom found without one of the latter). If this is in fact the case, then it is the heroic will of these men, who accomplish a difficult mission after much suffering, that also organizes the narrative of conquest and righteous self-assertion.

Throughout the poem, Machaut keeps firmly to his intention to demonstrate how Pierre, despite whatever evident personal failings he might have had, remained faithful to his mission. The *Prise* thus closes with a summary of its narrative theme from which neither the king nor his admiring biographer has much diverged:

He was so valiant—here's the main point
—That it would be honorable and fitting
For him to be numbered among the nine worthies;
And he'd make the tenth of their company,
For just as we've been saying
In all we've related about him,
Nothing made him stand out as much
As did honor—so saw every man.
And Mars favored and exalted him
So that he often sought out war
In which he found a hundred to his four.
Yet victory and honor were his,
And so, lords, if I honor him,
You should not think it strange.
(lines 8850–8862)

This vision is hardly expansive enough to be called epic in the Virgilian sense; Pierre's accomplishments do not lead to the (re)founding of a state or the salvation of a people. Machaut's more limited theme, however, admirably suits the aristocratic chronicle, whose chief purpose was to record for their contemporaries and for posterity the deeds of valiant men whose unswerving conformity to a code of values, what we call chivalry, dominated their sense of purpose and human worth. We might speculate that for this reason the *Prise* would have been read with great interest when it was first published. For with the resumption of hostilities between the French and English in the 1370s, the poet's account of Pierre's unstoppable drive to defend his realm and regain territory that was his by right should have offered a powerful model for the great nobles who were in all likelihood his first readers. They too were charged with a duty like the one imposed by the resurrected Jesus on the king of Cyprus.

SOURCES AND INFLUENCES

The deeds of Pierre I, as he learned of them from both his informants and, perhaps, the work of Philippe de Mézières, constitute the main source materials of the *Prise*. Though he occasionally, at least from the viewpoint of modern historians, purveys incorrect information, his omissions (such as his silence about Pierre's adulteries) and his errors (such as his occasional incorrect dating) are usually minor, certainly no indication of any decision to deceive or distort. The one significant exception might be his account of the aftermath of Pierre's murder, especially the description of the strange mistreatment of the king's corpse prior to burial and the revolutionary political acts of the aggrieved but now triumphant nobles (see lines 8769–8832 of the present edition). If Machaut is here bending the facts to suit his glorification of Pierre, an exaggerated vilifi-

cation of his murderers is at least understandable—if the poet's account is in fact exaggerated, but that remains in some scholarly doubt. Though criticized by earlier scholars, notably Mas Latrie 1877, for unjustly implicating the king's brothers in the crime, modern specialists, notably Edbury 1980, have tended rather to confirm the poet's harsh judgment. Machaut, it turns out, is for the most part a remarkably accurate and astute historian (certainly unjustified is the dismissive judgment offered in Levine 1985, 260, that the poem is full only of "discontinuous bursts of reality"). On the contrary, though admittedly partial to his subject, Machaut does show his fairness by recounting some episodes, particularly the torture of Marie de Giblet, that hardly redound to the king's glory but in fact offer some justification for his eventual assassination. The *Prise* is a work of history properly speaking, true enough, especially by medieval standards, to its sources; it is by no means a piece of simple-minded propaganda. In fact, the poem is in its turn an important source for any modern reconstruction of the events with which it is concerned.

From a literary rather than a historiographical point of view, however, the poem's relationship to its "sources," broadly considered, requires more extensive comment. On an elementary level, the *Prise* constitutes an important part of the author's production, which he considered to be in some sense a "whole." Machaut, to be sure, signals a distinct break between his other longer narrative works and the *Prise* by his choice of subject matter. In the poet's typical fashion, this break is also realized textually, mirrored in the work itself by the somewhat abrupt transition to the real matter of biography after the pleasing, mythographic fancies of the opening section. After more than two hundred lines, the poem in effect "begins again," abandoning fiction for truth:

> Now I will commence with my main theme,
> And tell all there is to know
> About the young man—may God save him
> —And how he conducted his life.
> (lines 259–62)

Though there is this textual suggestion of a break in the hitherto uninterrupted flow of poems drawn from the *Rose* tradition, Machaut establishes a structural continuity with his preceding works by continuing to write in octosyllabic couplets rather than the alexandrines used in most verse chronicles. The poetic chronicle borrows this structural feature from the *chanson de geste*. It is, in fact, a significant point of contact between the two literary genres, a sign of continuity in outlook and subject matter. The *alexandrine* or dodecasyllabic line is arguably better suited, because of its greater length and strong caesura, to the requirements of complicated historical narrative. This verse form replaced the decasyllabic line of the older *chanson de geste* and became standard as well in later poems within this tradition because "it offers to discourse a more expansive space" (Suard 1993, 11).

Despite this generic pressure, Machaut in the *Prise* uses the *octosyllabe*, traditional in the Old French fictional *roman* since the 1170s and the standard if not exclusive verse form of his longer *dits* (the *Jugement Behaingne* is in stanzaic quatrains, a youthful experiment not repeated; see Guthrie 1999 for further discussion). In a sense that is much emphasized by the omnibus manuscripts that contain it, Machaut's *Prise*, then, discovers its source, its most immediate literary context, in the authorial *oeuvre* that precedes, follows, and contains it. These transtextual connections are completed and formalized by the *Prologue* placed at the beginning of the collected works in manuscripts A and F–G. In this "foundational" text, Machaut is enjoined by Nature and Love to compose the poetry and music that are to make him famous, even as these creations, reflecting the divine order of things, are to do honor to the two deities—and to women in general. The *Prise* thus finds its effective cause, so to speak, in the divine commands communicated to the poet, or so the fictional account of his career in the *Prologue* would have his readers believe (see Palmer 1993 for text and translation of the *Prologue*, as well as further critical discussion).

In a wider sense, as we have already noted, the *Prise* belongs to a genre that extends beyond the poet's personal production: the aristocratic chronicle. Beyond a doubt, the *Prise* conforms to its genre in terms of subject matter (war), theme (chivalry), and basic structure (chronological narrative), but is somewhat idiosyncratic stylistically. It is especially interesting in this regard that Machaut avoids two features common in other aristocratic chronicles of the period.

On the one hand, Machaut does not succumb to the clerical tendency to place the life of Pierre I within an intellectual scheme. The opening of *Le Livre des Fais* offers an interesting contrast with Machaut's approach. This prose biography is otherwise quite similar to the *Prise* and may even have been influenced by it. Its subject is Jean le Maingre, more commonly known as Boucicaut, the marshal of France and a man famed for his exploits in the wars of the late fourteenth and early fifteenth centuries (the work was completed in 1409). The author states, moreover, that he chose this subject at the instigation of several nobles who campaigned with the marshal; these men have served as his informants. Like Machaut, he offers a strong brief in favor of Boucicaut that emphasizes the knight's accomplishments in battle and his virtuous character. As his editor declares, the writer's "objective was, it seems, to record the grand accomplishments of the marshal so that they might remain in human memory and serve as examples for knights to come" (Lalande 1985, xxv). Though the *Livre des Fais* is devoted to the deeds of a warrior nobility, it begins with a demonstration of the writer/clerk's intellectual powers:

> Two things are, by the will of God, established in the world exactly in the fashion of two pillars, to sustain the ordinances of human and divine laws that give to human beings a code for living peacefully and appropriately under the strictures of Reason, and that make human

> intelligence increase and grow larger in knowledge and virtue and also rescue it from ignorance—and along with this protect and sustain and augment private virtue and the public good, and without which the world would be just something confused and devoid of order of any kind. . . . These two pillars, without doubt, are Chivalry and Learning, which go together quite well (Lalande 1985, 6–7; translation mine).

In effect, the clerical author of the *Livre des Fais* argues for the indispensability of his own work. For if learning were to be destroyed, then "law should be nothing, and since man cannot live well without law, he would be reduced to living like a beast." But society cannot dispense with chivalry either. For in any land where chivalry might die out, "the grasping covetousness of those enemies who fear nothing would reduce it to disorder." Hence without knights like Boucicaut to protect it, civilization would cease to exist. Though these values are implicit in the *Prise*, such moralizing commentary is minimal there, confined mainly to sporadic references to Fortune and occasional more or less didactic comments about proper courtly behavior (such as the admonition against self-destructive truth telling in lines 8163–86). Beyond a doubt, however, Machaut shared with the anonymous author of the *Livre des Fais* the belief that the first estate of noble warriors needs the intellectual direction of those in the second of churchmen. Such a belief, in fact, constitutes the organizing principle of the *Confort d'ami*, which consists mainly of moralizing comment and exempla. The *Prise* and *Confort* share some themes in common in this regard, notably the extended praise of Jean of Bohemia as a chivalric model. In his last *dit*, however, Machaut avoids a clerical tone for the most part. In contrast to that of the *Livre des Fais*, the opening of the *Prise* offers an allegorical fiction of origins—an important point to which we will shortly return.

Machaut does not adopt the learned persona of the clerkly chronicler. He rejects as well that of a latter day *jongleur*. In an earlier age, when epic tales were more often performed than read, the wandering minstrel or *jongleur* felt "the need to establish a direct contact with his listeners." And so his appeal for attention was placed "at the very beginning, where the singer addresses his public in order to boast of the story he offers them" (Suard 1993, 19). In Machaut's own time, the *chansons de geste* continued to enjoy a substantial popularity that is attested by the works, often extensive, of talented *remanieurs* such as Jean Bodel and Adenet le Roi. Cuvelier's verse chronicle of the life of Bertrand du Guesclin may have been influenced by Machaut's *Prise*, or so some scholars believe. However Cuvelier, unlike his ostensible model, adopts the pose of a *jongleur* to give his story an epic cast. The opening of his poem deliberately recalls the extempore performance of the oral poet:

> Now please listen to me, knight and young man,
> City dwellers, man or woman, priests, clerks, friars,
> And I will sing to you the beginning and end

Of the valiant life of Bertran du Guesclin,
Constable of France, the valiant champion
Who was greatly feared as far as the watery Rhine
In France, in Auvergne, and in the Limousin.
Never since the time of king Alexander,
Or since King Arthur or King Pepin,
Or since the times of Godfrey or of Saladin,
Did such a man hold sway and give battle.
There are chronicles of him—doubt not that I think so.
Lords, now keep still and attend to me.
You who value reason and keep honor well,
Now draw close to me; I believe you will hear
A book that's long enough, just put into rhyme.
(Charrière 1859, lines 5–20; translation mine)

But if Machaut does not choose to stylize his chronicle in the manner of the *chansons de geste*, as does Cuvelier, he does subtly connect the *Prise* to the continuing tradition of vernacular epic. The twelfth century saw the development of a cycle of epic poems (in alexandrine verse form) that were devoted to the signal successes of the First Crusade and its principal hero: Godfrey of Bouillon. These works were refashioned at that century's end, gaining a new popularity, by a *remanieur* named Graindor of Douai, who added an account of Godfrey's youth and his mythical grandfather, the legendary swan knight (this brief discussion is based on Foulet 1989, Cook and Crist 1972, and Hatem 1932). Of more immediate relevance to Machaut perhaps is the fact that around 1350 a second *remaniement* of the epic cycle of the crusades was begun. Three poems are extant and a completing fourth can be deduced from a fifteenth-century prose romance, *Saladin*, which takes the narrative of Godfrey's heirs to its discouraging conclusion, the ultimate defeat of his line by the greatest of Saracen warriors. Interestingly, the first poem in the series, *Le Chevalier au Cygne et Godefroid de Bouillon* ends tragically as well, as Foulet 1989 describes: "the climactic episode of the poem, the poisoning of Godfrey by patriarch Heraclitus (vv. 27512–28537) is narrated with a certain amount of dramatic skill. Tancred [Godfrey's erstwhile companion in arms] is made to appear as the accomplice, however reluctant, of the murderer, and we are told that the day will come when Godfrey's mother, countess Ida of Boulogne, will exact a terrible vengeance for the death of her son" (114).

Godfrey of Bouillon is not only the latest of the nine worthies and the representative of a militant Christendom whose ardor for conquest will be reborn in the tenth, Pierre of Lusignan, according to Machaut. He is also Pierre's ancestor, the man most justified by ties of blood to inherit what Godfrey won and what his heirs then lost. The expanding series of poems devoted to him shows the workings of the *chanson de geste* as a form that cannot be contained by the boundaries of the individual text. In fact, the epic tradition of medieval France is defined by transtextual

clusters of poems, separate works joined by close narrative and thematic ties, the most famous of these are the cycles of Charlemagne, Guillaume d'Orange, and Doon de Mayence. And at the center of each "cycle" stands

> a martial figure whose prowess in many a combat has charmed a public never weary of hearing tales about prestigious heroes who fight and slay innumerable foes. At the beginning of the fourteenth century this avid interest was crystallized in the literary and iconographic cult of the "nine worthies." . . . The epic hero is not allowed to remain in splendid isolation; he may be the brightest star within his family constellation, but the deeds of his father, grandfather, brothers, sons, nephews, and grandsons are likewise memorable and so must be praised in epic song. Just as Charlemagne's father Pepin and his nephew Roland are the protagonists of various *chansons de geste*, so Godfrey of Bouillon's ancestors, brother, cousin, and their descendants were celebrated in epics built around their persons and deeds, real or imaginary. (Foulet 1989, 99)

Like the Godfrey cycle to which it is connected by matter and theme, Machaut's *Prise* opens with a brilliant account of the hero's miraculous and divine origins, an act of mythopoeia that centers on the hero's election to his special status. Like Godfrey, Machaut's Pierre fulfills the destiny bestowed upon him by a special mother. In Godfrey's case this is Ida, the child of the swan knight, who transmits to him the special blood inheritance of the original seven swan children. In Machaut's, it is Venus, the protecting spirit of Cyprus and mother also of the celebrated Aeneas. Like Godfrey, Pierre dies tragically, betrayed by those who should owe him allegiance and protect him from harm. Like those of Godfrey, Pierre's conquests pass on to lesser men. Thus in Pierre, the story of the line's originary hero is capitulated. What begins well ends badly. What is gained by blood and steel is lost by treachery. Machaut, it seems likely, thought his first readers would appreciate the connections he establishes between Pierre and the king's glorious ancestor and understand his poem, at least in part, as a continuation of the epic cycle of the Crusades.

Machaut's treatment of this exemplary (yet flawed) heroic life may have influenced other writers, notably Chaucer and François Villon, to write of the king of Cyprus; we cannot be sure. What impressed these two other poets, however, was not the way in which the glorious destiny of Godfrey manifested itself in the greatest of Christ's champions from their own age (see Braddy 1935, 1947 for further discussion of the Chaucerian connection; see La Monte 1932 for Villon). To Chaucer's monk, Pierre is one of a number of tragic cases. To Villon, his faded grandeur exemplifies the inevitably destructive workings of time on even the greatest of human accomplishments, those managed by the "lords of bygone times":

Likewise, where is that Scottish king,
Half of whose face, they say,
Was as red as an amethyst
From his forehead down to his chin?
And Cyprus's famous king,
Alas! And the good king of Spain
Whose name I do not know?
But where is the bold Charlemagne?
(lines 365–72 in Bonner 1960, 41)

It is fitting that Pierre finds his poetic final resting place not far from the greatest of medieval warrior kings, who in medieval legend also achieved a glorious victory over the enemies of God.

EDITORIAL POLICY FOR THIS TEXT AND TRANSLATION

Sources

Unlike most poets of the Middle Ages, Guillaume de Machaut was eager to present to the public his poetical and musical works as a unified *oeuvre* that would testify, in its breadth and variety, to his talent and accomplishment. Though his works are sometimes found individually bound with those of other authors, the most authoritative manuscripts offer more or less complete versions of the *oeuvre*. For some time, textual scholars evaluated these on the basis of what might be called a "growing contents" theory. Thus, the more complete manuscripts should be thought of as later and hence representing the poet's final version of his works (see Hoepffner 1908–21 and Williams 1969, 1978 for a discussion and defense of this view). In the *Voir Dit*, the character Guillaume de Machaut speaks of the book "in which I put all my works," establishing that there was at least one manuscript whose contents did grow, the poet's own compilation of fair copies. In the past two decades or so, this theory has been challenged, both as a global explanation of the affiliation of the surviving manuscripts and as a criterion for establishing the "best text" to be used for editions of individual poems (see, for example, Keitel 1977 and Kibler and Wimsatt 1999). It may well be that one or more of the surviving manuscripts is "incomplete" because its contents were meant to suit the tastes of a particular patron. Obviously, dating and the establishment of relative authority must rest on a careful examination of the evidence in each case. However, this does not mean that in deciding on the base text for an edition of any individual work, including the *Prise*, the view that the more complete manuscripts do carry no special authority can be laid aside lightly.

The poems of Machaut are found either individually or in groups in

seventy three manuscripts that have either survived or can be postulated with some certainty (see Earp 1995 for the most authoritative and detailed description of these). Nine extant manuscripts preserve Machaut's *oeuvre* in its most complete form (with some variation), and five of these offer versions of the *Prise d'Alixandre* (I follow Dzelzainis 1985 in so titling the poem rather than *Prise d'Alixandrie* with Mas Latrie since it is the former spelling of the city's name that is more common in the poem). The manuscripts are as follows, with the sigla assigned them by Hœpffner, one of Machaut's early editors:

A Paris, Bibliothèque nationale, fonds français MS 1584.
B Paris, Bibliothèque nationale, fonds français MS 1585
E Paris, Bibliothèque nationale, fonds français MS 9221.
F-G Paris, Bibliothèque nationale, fonds français MS 22545.
Vg New York, Wildenstein Family, no number.

Of these manuscripts, only **A** and **G** include a full version of the verse *Prologue* that Machaut wrote late in his career to serve as a literary explanation of why he devoted himself to the composition of verse and music (see Palmer 1993 for an edition/translation and discussion). **B** includes a short, perhaps preliminary, version of the *Prologue*. **Vg** lacks not only the *Prologue*, but some of the shorter works of Machaut's later career and the long *dit* that must have preceded the composition of the *Prise* by only a few years, the *Voir Dit*, Machaut's undoubted masterpiece. While, like **Vg**, **E** lacks some of the short, later *dits*, it does include full versions of both the *Voir Dit* and the *Prise*. Of the nine major omnibus manuscripts, only five include the *Prise*, which must have been composed after January 1369 (the month of Pierre's murder) and thus has to be Machaut's last major composition (as the order of contents in these five manuscripts customarily indicates). The three manuscripts that also include the *Prologue*, it can hardly be coincidence, also offer the best versions of the *Prise*.

A, **E**, and **G** are undoubtedly related to one another, but no direct affiliations can be established. Of the three, **A** and **G** may well have been copied from the same source, but these two manuscripts do not regularly agree against **Vg**, **B**, and **E**, as one might expect in such a case. **E** sometimes furnishes readings superior to those of **A** and **G**. We can hardly doubt that **A**, **E**, and **G** are no more than one or two removes from Machaut's own fair copy of the poem, which he might well have edited during the preparation of those omnibus manuscripts completed under his direction. In other words, "authorized" versions of the poems may have circulated in different "final" forms. For this reason, the principle of common error cannot be invoked with certainty to establish a "correct reading" in many cases of disagreement among the important manuscripts.

Choice of a base manuscript in these circumstances must be made after a careful review of evident reliability. **E** contains a large number of idiosyncratic errors, including its own versions of whole lines at various

points (it might be that the exemplar from which it was copied had lacunae that E's scribe has done his best to fill). G is also idiosyncratic, introducing a large number of variants that can hardly be anything but deliberate modifications (though these are cataloged extensively in Dzelzainis's unpublished edition, pp. 14–24, she still chooses G as her base text).

A has consistently, if not exclusively, been preferred by Machaut's literary (if not musical) editors because it offers reliable, if hardly error-free versions of the various texts. In addition, its index bears a rubric, unique among the other manuscripts, that reads "Vesci l'ordenance que Guillaume de Machau wet qu'il ait dans son livre" or "This is the arrangement that Guillaume de Machaut wishes his book to have." This rubric seems to indicate that Machaut was involved in the production of A. Furthermore, the miniatures in pen and ink throughout seem to be of provincial design, perhaps executed in Reims under the poet's personal supervision (see Avril 1982 for a full discussion of the relevant evidence). For these reasons, I have selected A as the base text for this edition, as I have done in the case of the other Machaut editions in the *Garland Library* and as did Mas Latrie for his edition of the *Prise* in 1877. I have not emended A's readings for minor grammatical and spelling variations (disagreements of this kind with the other manuscripts are not noted in the variants). Significant lexical and grammatical variants, however, are detailed, and the textual notes explain those instances, which are not numerous, in which I have deemed A's reading to be in need of correction. The textual notes do not address aspects of interpretation that would be obvious to a specialist reader, e.g. when *se* is to be interpreted as *si*, *lor* as *leur*, etc. The readings of G and E have been carefully collated with those of A, and I have regularly consulted with profit Dzelzainis's accurate and intelligent edition of the poem in regard to textual and lexical matters, though it is now somewhat dated because it predates the masterly and encyclopedic account in Earp 1995.

Orthography and Layout

Editors of Middle French have traditionally modernized many features of the manuscript text, most importantly separating words (or joining their constituent parts), changing letter forms to distinguish *u*/*v* and *i*/*j*, and introducing accents and punctuation. The underlying assumption seems to have been that Middle and modern French are sufficiently close that there is no good reason to inconvenience modern readers by leaving the text in its original state. But if we are seriously interested in Machaut's poetry, we should also be interested in the way it was set down. For him the two were inseparable, and if we are prepared to make the effort to understand the words he wrote, we should surely be prepared to read them.

A facsimile of an authoritative manuscript, or preferably of all the manuscripts, is thus the closest we can get to an ideal edition. Facsimiles bring with them, however, two significant disadvantages. Reading four-

teenth-century hands requires experience that cannot at present be reasonably expected of most users, including many scholars. And manuscripts contain copying errors that readers today cannot improve at sight, in the way that medieval readers surely did. There is therefore a strong case for editions that use modern print; that refer to other sources when the main manuscript needs emendation or when the other sources offer significant lexical and grammatical variants; and that correct identifiable errors, especially scribal ones. The main question for an editor, then, is how much more to do than simply print the text as it stands in the main manuscript. While on academic grounds we could most easily justify following the manuscript as closely as print allows, this contemporary edition of the *Prise* aims to bring new readers into Machaut's world. We must therefore consider the skills of a wide readership, including experts but also students and amateurs of medieval literature.

After much deliberation and consultation, I have decided to modernize those features of the original orthography that are shaped mainly by traditions of design or constraints of space in the manuscripts. Thus, this edition does not retain the separation of the initial letter from the rest of each line. This is, no doubt, a feature of the design of formal manuscripts, but probably not of Machaut's working copy; perhaps more important, modern readers are simply not accustomed to the practice. I have expanded abbreviations (including always printing *et* for the ampersand in order to be consistent), and I have separated words run together. These are features related to space constraints in two-column layout, the usual page design for poetic manuscripts in this period. They are functions of manuscript copying and prove bothersome to the modern reader yet yield nothing positive. I have, in contrast, chosen to represent the decorated initials of the manuscript, using drop capitals covering roughly the same number of lines (usually 3) as in the main manuscript. These provide essential information about the division of the text into sections. Modern accents or punctuation has not been added since these could have had no part in any fourteenth-century text. The *puncti* sporadically present in the original have, however, been retained since they offer no impediment to easy scanning and reading and take the reader one step closer to the original. Two important concessions to the contemporary reader have been made. The modern distinctions between *i* and *j* and between *u* and *v* have been followed throughout even though this is in some sense distorting, if only mildly so since scribal practice is itself inconsistent and these letter pairs are variants. The line numbers and folio indicators (referring only to manuscript **A**) are, of course, editorial additions to assist the reader. It should be noted in this regard that Mas Latrie's numbering includes an error that causes him to undercount the number of verses in the poem by one. While she corrects this error, unfortunately the line numbering in Dzelzainis is otherwise idiosyncratic, with numbers being assigned arbitrarily to a likely lacuna of indeterminate length and to the lines of copy for the included prose letters. I have followed neither practice here.

The facing English translation serves two quite different purposes which, in practice, it has not always proved possible to reconcile. On the one hand, the English is a guide for those reading the original, who might glance at it for assistance with a difficult construction or unknown word. For such readers, the most useful translation is a version in which each French expression is rendered by an appropriate English equivalent. Basic syntactical and grammatical similarities between Middle French and modern English make such translation possible, though sometimes, perhaps often the result would be awkward or unidiomatic. On the other hand, the translation serves those with no or very little knowledge of Middle French, for whom the best introduction to Machaut's poem is a modern English version that reproduces not only the meaning of the original, but something of its style. Except for the opening account of Pierre's birth, which is witty and elegant, Machaut's style here suits his subject matter admirably, which is to say that it is hardly "literary" in the same sense the poetry of his other works always is. He strives throughout for clarity and precision of expression, qualities that are well served by a fairly literal translation, such as I offer here. Sometimes, however, literalness must be sacrificed for clarity and fluency. In those instances, which are fortunately fairly rare, the reader looking for detailed help with Machaut's French may be disappointed, and for this I apologize. Most lines of the translation do correspond to those in the original. To produce easily readable English, however, I have sometimes not been guided by Machaut's syntax. All translation, of course, must fail to equal its source. In the end, there is no truly adequate substitute for an encounter with the original, an opportunity that is of course here offered as well.

Guillaume de Machaut

La Prise d'Alixandre

(The Taking of Alexandria)

ci commence le livre de la prise dalixandre

Quant li dieu par amours amoient cccixR
et les deesses se jouoient
aus dous gieus courtois savoureus
qui sont fais pour les amoureus
li clers solaus la belle lune
et des estoiles la commune
li .xii. signe et les planettes
qui sont cleres luisans et nettes
ordonnerent .i. parlement
fait de commun assentement
la ot maint dieu de grant puissance
et digne de grant reverence
et maintes deesses aussi
que je ne nommeray pas ci
car trop longue chose seroit
qui tous et toutes nommeroit
nimphes de bois et de rivieres
satireaus de toutes manieres
les tragedianes y vindrent
qui moult humblement se contindrent
tragedianes sacrefice
font aus dieus et divin office
et nymphes en poeterie
ce sont fees je nen doubt mie
mais ne fu pas a lassamblee
qui pour bien estoit assamblee
circe la male enchanteresse
qui denchantemens est deesse
car elle eust tout empeschie
dont ceust este grant peschie

Venus yert par especial
a ceste assamblee roial
mars qui est li dieus de bataille
et la belle venus sans faille
ne si estoit pas oubliee
eins estoit vestue et paree
com deesse royne et dame
en corps en biens en cuer en ame
de tous ceaus qui par amours aimment
voire et par dieu de ceaus qui naimment
car homs ne li puet eschaper
puis quelle le deingne atraper
mars leur dist tout en audience
ne say que chascuns de vous pence
mi bon et chier amy sont mort

Here begins the book of *The Taking of Alexandria.*

Once when the gods were enjoying love
Flirtatiously, and the goddesses were playing
Their charming, elegant, and delightful games
That are made for those inclined to romance,
The gleaming sun, the lovely moon,
And all the stars in concert,
The twelve signs and the planets,
Which are bright, shining, and pure,
Determined a parliament should be held,
Constituted by their mutual consent.
In attendance were many divinities of great power
And worthy of solemn reverence,
And many goddesses too,
Whom I will not name in this work,
Because it would overburden
Any man to name every one, male and female alike.
Nymphs from the woods and streams came there,
Satyrs of all degrees,
And also the priestesses,
Who conducted themselves most respectfully;
The priestesses made sacrifice to
The gods and performed the divine offices,
While the nymphs recited works in verse
(These are fairies, I do not doubt at all).
But Circe, the evil enchantress,
Who is the goddess of enchantments,
Was not present at the assembly,
Which had been called together for good,
For she would have obstructed everything,
Which should have been a great crime.

Mars, and this was important, attended
This royal congregation,
Who is the god of battle,
And beautiful Venus without fail.
Nor was she ignored.
Rather she was dressed and adorned
Like the queen, goddess, and lady,
In her person, demeanor, heart, and soul,
Over all those who love according to Love's rule,
Truly, by God, even of those who do not love;
For no man can escape
When she deigns to entrap him.
Mars spoke so all of them could hear:
"I know not what each here has in mind.
My virtuous and good friends now all lie cold

et fine par piteuse mort
ce sont li bons rois alixandres
qui conquist angleterre et flandres
et tant quist terre et mer parfonde cccixV
quil fu signeur de tout le monde
hector et cesar julius
et puis judas machabeus
david · josue · charlemainne
et artus qui ot moult de peinne
et dux godefroy de buillon
qui par son or et son billon
son sens · sa force · et sa vaillance
et de son grant bien lexcellence
mist toute en sa subjection
la terre de promission
ou au mains la plus grant partie
en la fin y laissa la vie
si deveriens tuit labourer
au bon godefroy restorer
et querir homme qui sceust
maintenir sa terre et deust
lors dist la compaingnie toute
mars dit raison qui en fait doubte
si supplierent a nature
quel feist une creature
le mieus et dou milleur affaire
quelle porroit ne saroit faire
lors de mars et venus ensamble
fist conjunction ce me samble
et la creature crea
si bien · qua chascun agrea
li dieux qui est signeur et maistre
de quan quil puet morir et naistre
de quan quil est fu et sera
et qui jamais ne finera
qui est darreins et premerains
et de tous les dieux souverains
mist dedens et lame et la vie
par sage et par noble maistrie
mais longuement pas natarga
que la deesse descharga
le fais de la conjunction
dont je vous ay fait mention
par lordenance de nature
qui en avoit toute la cure
vesta qui estoit la prestresse
et la souverainne maistresse
des nymphes des tragediannes
des juenes et des anciennes

And finished by a pitiful death.
These are the good king Alexander,
Who conquered England and Flanders,
And campaigned through so much of earth and ocean
He became lord of all the world;
Hector and Julius Caesar,
And afterward Judah Maccabee;
David, Joshua, Charlemagne,
And Arthur, who suffered mightily,
And Duke Godfrey of Bouillon,
Who, through his gold and wealth,
His cunning, his power, his valor,
And the excellence of his great virtue,
Made subject to him
All of the promised land,
Or at least its greater part;
There in the end he laid down his life.
Thus we must, all of us, struggle
To restore his land to noble Godfrey
And seek out some man who has the power
And the duty to maintain that domain."
The assembly then proclaimed in one voice:
"Mars speaks the truth—who could doubt?"
Therefore they implored Nature
That she should fashion a man,
The best and the most gifted of his estate
She could or knew how to create.
To do so she effected a conjunction
Of Mars and Venus, it seems,
So ably bringing about the man's making
That everyone was satisfied.
Then God who is lord and master
Over whatever can be born and die,
Over all that is, was, and will be,
And whose end will never come,
Who is both first and last,
The sovereign lord of all the divinities,
In his wise and noble mastery
Endowed that man with both life and soul.
But it was no long delay before
The goddess unmade
The conjunction she had effected,
The which I have mentioned,
According to Nature's ordinance,
In whose hands lies all such power.
Vesta, who was the priestess
And the sovereign mistress
Of the nymphs and priestesses,
Of the young and the old,

et de leur temples ensement
prioit la moult devotement
a tous dieus a toutes deesses
que de leurs courtoises largesses
a ceste creature nee
donnassent bonne destinee
et puis elle fist sacrefice
de buef · de tor · ou de genice
a trestous les dieus qui la furent
et aus deesses · si recurent
son sacrefice en si bon gre
que li enfes en haut degre
en fu · cest chose veritable
ne say se le tenez a fable

Lors li vieus saturnus parla
bien et honnestement · car la
navoit mie dieu ne deesse
qui le seurmontast de viellesse
et dist · cils enfes par raison
devroit entrer en la maison
par vaillance ou honneur demeure
faison li present sans demeure
car cest chose afferant et belle
adont ni ot celui ne celle
qui ne li feist en present
bel et bon et riche present
pour lui mener sans deshonnour
tout droit en la maison donnour
mais je ne say pas se fortune
fu de ceste assamblee lune
car en la fin on le sara
selonc ce quelle li fera

Or est nez nostres jouvenciaus
a cui li dieux qui est en ciaus
doint grace · honneur et bonne vie cccxR
mais li est drois que je vous die
lannee et le jour que il fu nez
et pour ce vueil que vous tenez
que diex et nature homme nuef
le feirent lan .xxix.
le jour de feste saint denis
a leure que jours est fenis

Or est il bien drois que on regarde
que cils enfes ait bonne garde
car vraiement il ne doit mie
estre sans bonne compaingnie

And of their temples too,
Very devoutly made an entreaty
To all the gods and goddesses
That in their worthy generosity
They would bestow upon
This just born person a noble destiny.
And then she offered a sacrifice
Of cows, bulls, and calves
To all the gods there present,
And to the goddesses also; so they received
Her sacrifice with such good will
That the infant was granted high rank
As a result—that's the truth of the matter.
I don't know if you consider this a fable.

Afterward old Saturn spoke out
Ably and honestly; for there present
Was no other god or goddess
Who surpassed him in age.
And he said: "It makes good sense
That this child should enter through his valor
The mansion where honor makes a home.
Let's not delay in bestowing upon him our presents,
For this is the noble and fitting course."
No god or goddess in attendance
Did not at that very moment
Give him some fine, rich, and useful gift
So that, avoiding disgrace, he might be directed
Straight toward the dwelling place of honor.
But I do not know if Fortune
Was one of this company;
Yet in the end this will be known
By what she accomplishes for him.

Now our young man is born,
The one to whom the gods in the heavens
Have granted grace, honor, and a fortunate life.
But it is appropriate I tell you
The year and the day he was born
And for this reason I wish you to know
That God and Nature created
This new man in the year twenty-nine,
On the feast of St. Denis,
At the hour when the day draws to its end.

Now it is quite fitting that someone makes sure
This infant has proper protectors
Because, truly, the man should be without
Good companions during his life.

si quil ont esleu et pris
.iiii. deesses de haut pris
pour lui nourrir et gouverner
enseingnier et endoctriner
hebe deesse de jouvente
qui est et belle et douce et gente
et qui est des dieus boutilliere
fu esleue la premiere
pour lui norrir en son enfance
jusque a lestat de congnoissance
ou plus avant se mestier yere
car bien en savoit la maniere
apres il prierent minerve
le deesse · quelle le serve
et elle le fist volentiers
quil estoit ses cousins entiers
minerve est deesse et maistresse
et dame de toute sagesse
apres juno fu appellee
qui estoit si tres bien paree
que tous li airs resplendissoit
de la clarte qui delle yssoit
on li pria moult doucement
et moult affectueusement
que li enfes neust deffaut
de tout ce qua corps domme faut
de joiaux ne dor ne dargent
pour lui et pour toute sa gent
li vieus saturnus len pria
et elle tantost lottria
car bien faire en pooit largesse
comme deesse de richesse
et ja soit ce que saturnus
fust a lassamblee venus
et quil soit rudes et contraires
aus hommes et a leurs affaires
je croy quil fu la nez dartois
car il li fu dous et courtois
et pour lenfant · car il sefforce
pour son bien de toute sa force

Apres venus sa chiere mere
qui de lenfant forment se pere
y fu com dame souverainne
qui moult met sa cure et sa peinne
afin quil soit bien entroduis
en amours cest tous ses deduis
riens plus ne li vuet consillier
et mars laprent a batillier

And so they chose and elected
Four goddesses of high rank
To look after and direct,
To teach and instruct him.
Hebe, goddess of youth,
Who is pretty, sweet, and gentle,
And who serves as the housemaid of the heavens,
Was picked to be the first
So that she could care for him in his infancy
Until the age of self-awareness,
Or even longer if need be,
For she knew much of such matters.
Afterward, they implored the goddess
Minerva to serve him.
And she agreed to do so gladly
Because he was her closest cousin.
Minerva is the goddess and mistress
And patron of all forms of wisdom.
Afterward Juno was summoned,
Who was arrayed with such finery
That all the air shimmered
With the brightness gleaming from her.
She was asked very sweetly
And with much affection
That the young child should not lack
Anything that a man's person requires,
Jewels or gold or silver
For him and all his retinue as well.
Ancient Saturn made this request of her,
And the lady granted it at once,
For she could be quite generous in this regard
As the goddess of wealth.
And although Saturn had made his way
To the assembly and although
He might be unpleasant and contrary
Toward men and their affairs,
I believe that he had been born in Artois,
For he was kind and courteous to her,
And to the child, for he took great pains
To benefit him, using all his power.

Afterward, Venus, his dear mother,
Who eagerly assumed charge of the child,
Was there as his sovereign lady,
And she labored hard, was much concerned
That he be suitably introduced
To the affairs of love; that's the sum of her delight.
She would counsel him in nothing else,
And Mars taught him the art of war.

mais il navoit nul escuier
ou bien se peust apuier
si que on li a baillie avis
qui portera ce mest avis
sa baniere et le servira
toutes fois que mestiers sera
vulcans fu en leure mandez
mars li dist a moy entendez
vous avez des dieux la science
et vraie et juste experience
lauctorite et la maistrie
seur tous ouvriers qui sont en vie
pour .i. homme armer proprement
richement et seurement
faites moy unes armeures
bonnes et belles et seures
qui seront pour cest enfancon
et si les vueil de tel facon
que li ouvrages croistera
selonc ce quil amendera
vulcans respont comme avisez cccxV
joy bien ce que vous devisez
si feray tout vostre plaisir
car voloir en ay et loisir
je fis les armes dachylles
dont ayaus socist qui les
perdi par maise plaiderie
contre ulixes duc dulixie
mais je les vous ferai plus beles
plus gentes plus cointes que celles
plus fortes et milleurs assez
eins quil soit demi an passez
et si ara quan que on puet querre
en lair en la mer · en la terre
et des batailles troianes
et des hystoires anciennes
mais ne say quels armes il porte
mars commande quon li aporte
quant il les vit moult les prisa
et louvrage a faire empris a

Or est raison que je vous nomme
son nom telement que tout homme
le puist legierement savoir
et le mien sans grant peinne avoir
vesta lenfancon baptisa
et nom li mist que moult prisa
vezci comment se bien querez
son nom et le mien trouverez

But there was no squire present
On whom he could well depend
So that he would be provided with counsel,
Who would carry, such is my thought,
His banner and serve him
Whenever the need might arise.
Vulcan was summoned within the hour.
Mars said to him: "Listen to me.
You have knowledge proper to the gods,
As well as true and proper experience,
Authority and mastery in greater
Abundance than any craftsman alive
In arming a man properly,
Richly, and securely.
Make for me a suit of armor
That is useful, handsome, and safe,
And it would be for this infant.
Now I want this piece of work so fashioned
That it will increase in size
As the child himself grows."
Vulcan responded like a wise man:
"I understand well what you describe.
And I'll do all that you want,
For I have the will for the job and the time too.
I forged arms for Achilles,
And so Ajax killed himself, who lost
Them in an unfortunate dispute
With Ulysses, duke of Ulissia.
But for you I will make ones that are even better,
More noble, more striking in their appearance,
Stronger and rather better than the others too,
Before half a year has passed, and they will be
Decorated with every kind of device you could desire:
From the air, from the sea, from the earth;
And with the battles from the Trojan war
And the histories of ancient times too.
But I do not know what arms he bears."
Mars ordered these sent to him,
Which Vulcan, looking upon them, much admired,
And he began the manufacture of his charge.

Now it is right that I name for you
This man's name and my own as well,
In such a way that anyone
Could readily come to know them.
Vesta baptized the infant
And gave him a name she highly esteemed.
Look here how if you search ably
You will find his name and my own.

prenez ce plus prochain notable
si les y trouverez sans fable
en .ii. vers dune grosse fourme
dont le darrenier vous enfourme
que .h. seule y ajousteres
et dou premier .mar. osteres
mis les ay par tele maniere

adieu ma vraie dame chiere
pour le milleur temps garde chier

honneur a vous quaim sans trichier
mais il couvient desassambler
ses lettres et puis rassambler
si supplie a tous de cuer fin
sencor met ces vers en la fin
de ce livre · que desprisier
ne men veuillent ne mains prisier
car savoir ne puis nullement
de ce livre le finement
si vueil dire eins quil soit parfais
le signeur pour qui je le fais
et moy nommer qui nuit et jour
y vueil entendre sans sejour

Or vueil commencier ma matiere
et dire toute la maniere
dou damoisel que dieus aye
et comment il usa sa vie
quant il ot laage de .ix. ans
que de norrice fu exens
et laissa lestat de innocence
et prist a avoir congnoissance
toutes ses inclinations
et ses ymaginations
tuit si penser tuit si desir
furent en faire le plaisir
de dames et de damoiselles
moult li furent plaisans et belles
il honnouroit les chevaliers
et compaingnoit les escuiers
et amoit armes et honnour
seur tout apres nostre signour
car en ses ouevres et ses fais
estoit en lamour dieu parfais
tout ce faisoit il de cuer fin
sans cesser · et a telle fin
quen son tans peust dire et faire

Go to the next notable passage,
Where you will uncover them, and no lie,
In two verses written in large letters,
The last of which to you reveals
That you need only add an H
While suppressing the letters MAR from the first.
I've fashioned them as part of the following:

"Farewell, my true lady dear,
Keep your thoughts on better times;

Honor to you, whom I love without deception."
Now you must take the letters
Apart and then reassemble them.
With a pure heart I ask everyone
That if I repeat these verses at the end
Of the book they will not think less of me
For so doing, or hold me in lower esteem,
But I cannot know at all
If this book will be completed.
And so I will proclaim before it is finished
The name of the lord for whom I'm composing
And name myself as well—for night and day
I wish to attend to this without rest.

Now I will commence with my main theme
And tell all there is to know
About the young man—may God save him
—And how he conducted his life.
After he reached the age of nine
And quit his nurse,
And left behind the state of innocence
And he began to have understanding,
All of his inclinations,
All of what he imagined,
All his thoughts, all his desires
Were directed toward what would afford pleasure
To ladies and young women.
These he found very appealing and attractive.
He paid honor to knights,
Was a companion to squires,
And esteemed arms and honor
Above all else after Our Lord,
For in his deeds and actions
His love for God was perfect.
All these things he did with a pure heart,
Never ceasing, and with this goal,
That in his time he could say and do

chose qui bien li deust plaire
et cestoit la conclusion
de toute son entention
einsi comme apres le sarez
quant bien leu ce livre arez
tout ensement en sa juenesse cccxiR
le norrit hebe la deesse
et si tres bien lendoctrina
que toute bonne doctrine a

Afamagosse a une crois
que tu yes fos se tu ne crois
que cest la crois dou bon larron
car sus siege ne sus poron
nest assise mais purement
est en lair sans atouchement
et .c. mil hommes lont veu
qui lont aoure et creu
si quil avint le venredi
que jhesu cris en crois pendi
quen parfaite devotion
et en vraie contrition
cil damoisiaus laloit ourer
mais a li vint sans demourer
une vois qui li prist a dire
.iiii. fois ou .v. tire a tire
fils · entrepren le saint passage
et conqueste ton heritage
que dieus aus sains peres promist
et ou pour toy son corps tout mist
quant il oy ceste parole
qui fu clere sans parabole
.iiii. fois ou .v. repetee
dedens son cuer fu si fermee
et par tel guise le nota
quonques puis il ne len osta
si prist a penser durement
et souvent et parfondement
a la chose qui li fu dite
et qui en son cuer fu escripte
comment il se porroit chevir
a si tres grant ouevre assevir
et ce nest mie grant merveille
vraiement sil y pense et veille
car onques mais par homme emprise
ne fu nulle plus grant emprise
ne homs puis mil ans tel ne vit
or orrez comme il se chevit

Something that should well please Him.
And this was the goal
Of everything he intended to accomplish,
As you will come to learn hereafter
When you've read this book well through.
Just in this fashion, while he was young
The goddess Hebe nourished him,
And she instructed him so ably
That he learned every appropriate teaching.

At Famagusta was a cross,
And you are a fool not to believe
That it was the cross of the virtuous thief
Because it was fixed neither on a pediment
Nor wooden base; but floated
Freely in the air, touching nothing,
And a hundred thousand men have seen it,
Who have worshipped the cross and believed.
And so it happened on the Friday
Jesus Christ hung on the cross
That in perfect devotion
And with true contrition
This young man went there to worship.
But suddenly came to him
A voice that began to utter,
Four times or five in a row:
"Son, undertake the holy passage
And conquer your heritage,
Which God promised to the Holy Father,
And where for your sake He laid His body down."
When he heard these words,
Which were clear, nothing obscure in them,
Repeated four or five times,
They became firmly fixed in his heart,
And they were inscribed within him in such a way
He never afterward forgot them.
And he began to think hard,
And often and deeply
About what had been said to him,
Which had been written in his heart,
How he might see about
Accomplishing such a very grand task,
And truly it's no great wonder
That he mulled this over, losing sleep,
Since never before had such a noble enterprise
Been undertaken by any man alive, yet no one
Had seen anything like it for a thousand years.
Now listen to what the young man did.

Il prist ferme conclusion
a grant deliberation
par maintes fois en son corage
quil entrepenroit le passage
mais il y avoit bien maniere
car ce nest pas chose legiere
de mettre a fin si tres grant ouevre
et pour ce faut il bien quil ouevre
sagement et de grant avis
et par conseil ce mest avis
car homs de bien trop fort mesprent
quant aucune chose entreprent
et il nest toudis sus sa garde
quil pense a la fin et regarde
quel part quil voist et dou quil veingne
einsois que grant chose entreprengne
car ja bonne ouevre ne fera
qui la fin ne resgardera
et saucune fois bien en chiet
pour une fois .iiii. en meshciet
si fist une ordre pour attraire
les chevaliers de bon affaire
qui avoient devotion
en terre de promission
et aussi pour toutes gens darmes
qui voloient sauver leur ames
et vesci lordre et la devise
einsi com je la te devise
il portoit entre toute gent
une espee de fin argent
qui avoit le pomel desseure
en signe de crois quon aeure
assise en .i. champ asure
de toutes coulours espure
et savoit lettres dor entour
qui estoient faites a tour
disans bien men doit souvenir
cest pour loiaute maintenir
car je lay mille fois veu cccxiV
sus les chevaliers · et leu
et sil venoit aucun noble homme
de france · despaingne ou de romme
de lombardie ou dalemaingne
ou dangleterre ou de sardeingne
ou de quelque part quil venist
a son pooir il couvenist
quil li annoncait les pardons
par douce priere et par dons
de ce devost pelerinage

He reached the firm conclusion
By a great deal of deliberating
Time and again in his heart,
That he'd undertake the passage.
But much was required for this
Because it is no easy thing
To accomplish such an exalted charge;
And so it was certainly very necessary
That he act wisely and with much consideration,
According to counsel, as I believe.
For any man errs very gravely
When he assumes a responsibility
And doesn't always remain careful
That he direct his thoughts toward the goal,
Watch his step and where he's going,
Before he undertakes a serious mission,
For no man will ever succeed at much of note
If he does not keep his eyes on the goal;
And so if someone said that luck is his,
For every instance of it he'd suffer misfortune four times.
And he founded an order to attract
Knights of quality,
Men who felt devotion
To the promised land,
And also it was for all men at arms
Who were eager to save their souls.
And here are the order and its symbol,
Just as I'll describe them for you.
Among all peoples, he bore
A sword of pure silver,
Whose pommel was fashioned
In the shape of the cross we worship,
Placed on a field of azure blue,
The purest of all colors.
And there were letters of gold all around,
Which had been nicely inscribed
And spelled, as well I have cause to remember,
"This is to maintain loyalty,"
For I have seen it a thousand times
On the knights and read it.
And if any nobleman were to come
From France, from Spain, or from Rome,
From Lombardy or from Germany,
Or from England or Sardinia,
Or from any place at all he might come from,
Then it was his obligation, within his power,
To make clear to that man the pardon,
Through sweet prayer and by gifts,
Involved in the devout pilgrimage

quon apele le saint voiage
et ce li faisoit entreprendre
et puis apres son ordre prendre
et le fasoit secretement
sagement et meurement
sans trop parler sans trop plaidier
par quoy il sen peust aidier
car il ne pooit autrement
joir de son fait bonnement
encor y a un autre point
que je ne te celerai point
se ses peres qui roy estoit
et qui coronne dor portoit
sceust dou fil lentrepresure
et quil metoit toute sa cure
en ce passage seulement
trop sen couroussast durement
si len peust espoir retraire
par force ou par sairement faire
si que li fils le ressongnoit
trop fort et bien li besongnoit
quil tenist la chose secrete
par voie honnnourable et discrete
or diray la signefiance
de lespee · car sans doubtance
avis mest que je mesprendroie
saucune chose nen disoie

La blanche espee signefie
purte de cuer et nette vie
car cils qui meinne vie pure
sans mal · sans pechie sans ordure
ara lame polie et blanche
devant dieu plus que noif sus branche
et nara tache ne bruette
eins sera clere et pure et nette

Et si signefie justice
car cils fait bien qui ceus justice
qui nuevrent mie lealment
mais bien se gardent que egalment
au grant et au petit la face
sans trop grant rigueur et sans grace
et li .ii. trenchans se tenseignent
que en sanc des hommes se baingnent
la pointe pongnant et ague
les paresseus point et argue
qui ne sarment pas volentiers
et qui ensievent les sentiers

That is called the holy voyage.
And so he made him undertake it
And then afterward join his order.
And this he did secretly,
Wisely, and maturely,
Without much talk, without much preaching,
In order that he might advance his cause.
For he could not otherwise properly
Take joy in what he was doing.
And there is something else
I will not conceal from you at all.
Should his father, who was the king,
And who wore a crown of gold,
Have learned of his son's enterprise
And that he was devoting all his energies
Solely to the passage,
He would have become quite terribly angry
And could, perhaps, have made him give it up
Through force or by making him swear an oath.
And so the son feared the man
Very much and acted wisely in his regard
Since he kept the matter secret
In an honorable and discreet fashion.
Now I will explicate the meaning
Of the sword, for, without doubt,
I would certainly be remiss
Were I not to say something about it.

The white sword signifies
Purity of heart and clean living;
For the man who leads a pure life,
Without evil, without sin, without filth,
Will have a soul that's clean and white,
More than snow on the bough, appearing before God.
And his soul will have no speck of filth nor fault,
But will be clear, pure, and unsoiled.

And the sword signifies justice too
Because the man does right to pass judgment
On those who do not act in good faith;
But such a man must take care
To treat equally the exalted and the low-born,
With neither great harshness nor favor.
And the two edges show you
That they will bathe in the blood of men.
The sword's tip, sharp and pointed,
Prods the slothful, presses closely
Those who do not willingly take to arms
And who follow the pathways

de la fonteinne de delices
qui seuronde de tous les vices
mais aucune fois les retrait
et a bien faire les attrait

La crois est li plus nobles signes
des crestiens et li plus dignes
car dieus y fu crucifiez
pour nous tous et martyriez
qui nasqui de sa vierge mere
par le commandement dou pere
et denfer tous nous racheta
et ses bons amis en geta

Or vueil dire sans detrier
que la crois puet signefier
trop bien puet signifier foy
car quant uns homs est en effroy
se de sa destre main se seingne
puis na paour que mauls li veingne
par pluseurs sains le vueil prouver
qui lont sceu par esprouver

Li saint apostre garissoient
tous ceus qui sante demandoient
sains georges tua le serpent cccxiiR
qui avoit de lonc .i. erpent
saint blaises sus le lac embla
qui terre ferme li sambla
saint lorent rendi la veue
a ceaus qui lavoient perdue
sainte margarite creva
le serpent qui moult la greva
et cent mille que sains que saintes
ont moustrees miracles maintes
tout par la vertu de la crois
mar fus nez se tu ne le crois
car cest une droite creance
et de nostre foy lordenence

La pongnie dont on la tient
le cuer en seurte soustient
car quant on la en sa main destre
li cuers en doit plus seurs estre
par champs · par villes · par boscages
pour gens et pour bestes sauvages
et par elle te dois deffendre
sil est riens qui te vueille offendre
aussi dou pommel la rondesse

To the fountain of delights,
Which holds within every vice.
Yet sometimes the sword drives them back
And persuades them to do good.

The cross is the most noble
And dignified of Christian symbols
Because God was crucified on it
And made a martyr for all our sakes,
And He was born of the Virgin Mary
Through the command of the Father,
And He redeemed us all from Hell
And from there released his good friends.

Now I intend to say with no obscurity
What the cross can signify.
Quite properly it can stand for faith.
For when a man is afraid,
If he signs himself with his right hand,
Then he has no fear anything evil can come upon him.
And I'll offer proof in the several saints
Who came to learn this through experience.

The holy apostles found a cure
For all who asked to be healed.
Saint George destroyed the dragon,
Which was more than a league in length;
Saint Blaise walked across a lake
That felt like solid earth to him;
Saint Lawrence gave back sight
To those who had lost it;
Saint Margaret destroyed
The serpent that greatly tormented her.
And a hundred thousand saints, men and women,
Have been the source of many miracles,
All brought to pass by the power of the cross.
Ill-fortuned by birth are you if you don't trust to it
Because this is a true belief.
And the foundation of our faith.

The pommel by which the sword is held
Preserves the heart in safety.
For when a man grasps it in his right hand,
The heart is bound to be more resolute
Through fields, through villages, through wilderness,
Against men and savage beasts alike.
And with the sword you can ably defend yourself
If anything intends you harm.
And too the roundness of the pommel

demoustre quelle est grant maistresse
et quen monde a grant signourie
car elle donne mort et vie
li uns en muert bien le savez
et li autres en est sauvez
elle vaint et donne victoire
honneur et honte · enfer et gloire
et si signefie conqueste
qui est chose belle et honneste
car quant uns haus princes conquiert
par lespee gloire et acquiert
honneur et profit tout ensamble
et bon memoire ce me samble
ne sans li homs nara tant pris
sil ne la quil nen soit repris
neis hector le bon combatant
car je ten puis bien dire tant
quelle est legiere et point et taille
mout souvent destoc et de taille
quant un homme vaillant la porte
qui au batillier se deporte

Aussi signiefie elle force
car il nest homme son lefforce
que mieudres nen soit ses confors
sil la · et quil nen soit plus fors
et samenistre hardement
pour combatre hardiement
nil nest homs si acouardis
sil la · qui nen soit plus hardis
et se fait on les chevaliers
armez aus chams sus leurs destriers
quant on vuet entrer en bataille
de ceste espee qui bien taille
pour garder raison et justise
orphenins vesves · et leglise
cest leurs mestiers dieus leur doint grace
que chascuns saintement le face

Or ay devise de lespee
si revenray a ma pensee
dou damoisel que dieus confort
qui pensoit jour et nuit si fort
au saint passage que sans doubte
il y metoit sentente toute
si se pensa quil partiroit
de son pais et quil iroit
en france pour honneur acquerre
car aussi y avoit il guerre

Manifests that the sword is a great mistress
And wields great power in the world,
For she gives life and death.
One man is killed by it, as well you know,
And another is saved thereby.
She conquers and bestows victory,
Honor and shame, the hellish pit and glory,
And so signifies conquest,
Which is a worthy and fine thing.
For when a high prince wins victory
By the sword, he gains glory,
Honor, and profit all at once,
A fine reputation too, so I believe.
Nor without it will any man be worthy enough,
If he does not have one, so that he'll not be reproached,
Not even Hector the able fighting man;
But I can certainly tell you this much,
That the sword is quick and sharp, well designed
Very often in form and length
When the valiant man wields it,
He who takes his delight in making war.

The sword also signifies power.
For there's no man who if attacked
Will not be more at ease
Possessing one, and who will not be braver
Because the sword gives him the courage
To do battle with valor.
And there is no man so cowardly
Who with a sword would not be more courageous.
And it is also thus with the knights,
In their armor on the field, astride their chargers
When they are dubbed and are eager to do battle
With this sword that cuts well
In order to safeguard right and justice,
Orphans, widows, and the church.
This is their duty. God grant them the grace
That each of them piously fulfills it!

Now that I've described the sword,
I will return to my theme
Of the young man—may God comfort him
—Who thought day and night so intently
About the passage to the holy land
That beyond doubt it claimed all his attention.
And he determined that he'd quit
His own land and set out
For France in order to pursue honor
Since war was also being waged there;

et pour acointier les signeurs
les grans · les moiens · les meneurs
les chevaliers les escuiers
les bourgois et les saudoiers
et pluseurs autres qui armer
se vorroient outre la mer
car il y avoit des parans
des plus grans et des plus parans
pour eaus requerir par linage
dentreprendre le saint passage
les uns par dons et par prieres cccxiiV
lautre par faire bonne chieres
tout pour aquerir laliance
des bonnes gens darmes de france
et si parti en une galee
bien abillie et bien armee
sans le sceu dou roy son pere
et de la royne sa mere
mais ne say qui le revela
et dist au roy sire vez la
vostre fil en ceste galee
ne say quel part sera salee
et quant li roys a ce veu
il ot le sanc tout esmeu
et dist or tost alez apres
et si le sievez si de pres
que mort ou vif le ramenez
lui sa gent et toutes ses nez
la gent le roy saparillierent
et leurs galees abillierent
et par mi la mer le suivent
jour et nuit tant quil le prenent
si lont baillie et presente
au roy contre sa volente

Quant li rois le vit il li dist
biaus fils or enten a mon dit
tu es mes fils et sui tes peres
or mest avis que tu te peres
de faire contre mon voloir
mais le cuer ten feray doloir
tu me dois toute oubeissance
foy pais · honneur et reverence
et tu ten vas sans congie prendre
au ciel cuides la grue prendre
quant tu vas en estrange terre
et ne scez que tu y vas querre
que te faut il en ce pais
certes je sui tous esbahis

And in order to meet with the lords too,
The great, the small, and those in-between,
The knights, the squires,
Townspeople and soldiers,
As well as many others who might be eager
To take up arms across the sea.
For he had relations in that country
Of the highest rank, and very close to his family,
Whom he could persuade by claim of blood
To undertake the holy passage,
Some through gifts and appeals,
Others by showing them a pleasant demeanor,
All in order to secure an alliance
With the noble knights of France.
And so he departed by galley,
One well provisioned and armed,
Without the knowledge of the king, his father,
Or the queen, his mother.
But someone, I know not who, revealed the secret
And said to the king: "Sire, look there
At your son in that galley;
I don't know where he intends going."
And when the king did see,
His blood began to boil,
And he said: "Quickly now, go after him,
And follow closely enough
To bring the boy back dead or alive,
Him, his people, and all his ships."
The king's men readied themselves
And provisioned their vessels,
And they gave chase day and night
Across the sea until they captured him.
Then they returned the man and brought him
Against his will before the king.

When the king looked upon him, he said:
"Sweet son, listen to what I say.
You are my son, and I your father.
It seems you are determined to undertake
Something that I oppose,
But this I will make you regret in your heart.
You owe me complete obedience,
Faith, respect, honor, and reverence,
And you set out without a by your leave?
You intend to do an extraordinary thing
When you travel to some strange land
And do not know what you have gone to seek.
What do you lack in this country?
Surely I am quite outraged

de ta tres grant outrecuidance
de ta sotie et de tenfance
mais vraiement je te tendray
que laler hors te deffendray
par tel guise laraisonna
et puis tantost lemprisonna
et le tint .ii. mois et .ix. jours
en prison tels fu ses sejours
la petit but et po menja
la maint divers songe songa
la mainte pensee diverse
li bailla fortune qui verse
ceuls quelle a mis en haut degre
mais elle le fait tout de gre
car cest sa foy cest sa nature
quelle naimme tant creature
que de haut en bas ne le tume
par loy · par us · et par coustume
mais dieus li peres qui savoit
quel volente lenfant avoit
de li servir le delivra
car le roy son pere enivra
dune douce larme piteuse
paternelle et amoureuse
si le delivra toute voie
dont tous le pais ot grant joie
avec lui par tout le menoit
et moult pres de lui le tenoit
et si levoit toute sa rente
et la lonteinne et la presente
par quoy riens faire ne peust
que li peres ne le sceust

Einsi demoura longuement
qua creature nullement
ne dist son cuer ne sa pensee
eins la tint enclose et secree
si quil ne la volt descouvrir
en lieu ou la deust couvrir
jusqua tant que li termes vint
que le roy son pere couvint
rendre a nature le treu cccxiiiR
et paier · qui li est deu
cest a dire quil trespassa
et que lestrange pas passa
dont creature ne rapasse
tant bien son alee compasse
si que moult honnourablement
fist faire son enterrement

By your unthinkable presumption,
By your madness and your childishness.
Yet truly this I promise:
I will prevent you from making off."
He reasoned with him in this fashion
And then locked him up right away
And held him two months and nine days
In prison: this was his experience.
There he drank little and ate less.
There he dreamed many a strange dream.
There he was prompted to entertain many
An unusual thought by Fortune, who overturns
Those she has brought to high degree.
But this she does willingly,
For that's her credo, that's her nature:
She doesn't love any creature so strongly
She doesn't make him slip from high to low
In accordance with law, precedent, and custom.
But God the Father, Who knew
What desire the young man had
To serve Him, arranged for his freedom.
For He inspired in the king his father
The sweet tear of pity,
Paternal feelings and affection.
And he freed the young man straightaway,
Which gave the country great joy.
He took the young man everywhere with him,
And he kept him quite close
And cut off all his monies,
Those due now and later;
In this way he could do nothing
That the father did not come to know.

And he endured this a long time,
So that he never told anyone
What was in his heart or on his mind.
Instead he kept it closed inside and secret,
For he had no wish to reveal this
In circumstances that forced him to dissemble,
Until at last the time came to pass
That the king his father was forced
To keep his compact with Nature
And pay the debt then due to her,
That is, the man passed away
And trod that strange path
Which no creature ever trods again,
However skillfully he knows to travel.
And he arranged very honorably
For his burial to be carried out.

apres li fils se coronna
et sus son chief la coronne a
de fin or · si gouverne et regne
comme sires de tout le regne
par le gre de tous et de toutes
sans empeschement et sans doubtes

Or est roy nostres damoiseaus
qui ne met nen chiens nen oiseaus
sa pensee ne sestudie
einsois jour et nuit estudie
a destruire les annemis
de la foy la son cuer a mis
et ses delis et sa plaisence
cest tous ses desirs sans doubtance
dont il fist chose belle et bonne
le premier an de sa coronne
il sen ala en ermenie
la prist par force et par maistrie
.i. chastel quon appelloit courc
si vous en diray brief et court
li chastiaus fu subjes aus turs
grans et puissans fors et seurs
de fossez de tours · de muraille
mais a lespee qui bien taille
versa tout comble et fondement
la se porta si fierement
que tout fu mort quan quil trouva
la premierement sesprouva

Que fist il la seconde annee
que coronne li fu donnee
il sen ala lui et sa gent
par mi la haute mer nagent
tant quil vint devant satalie
une cite quest en turquie
grande et puissant et ferme et forte
mais il ni ot ne mur ne porte
ne gens qui la peust deffendre
que li bons rois ne lalast prendre
et destruire et mettre a lespee
et si la toute arse et brulee
la veist on maint drap de soie
et de fin or qui reflamboie
ardoir · et mainte dame belle
maint sarrasin mainte pucelle
maint turc et maint enfant perir
par feu ou par glaive morir
puis en son pais retourna
que fait ailleurs autre tour na

Afterward he had himself crowned
And had on his head a diadem
Of pure gold. He governed and reigned
As the lord of the whole kingdom
Through the consent of all, women and men alike,
Who were not compelled and had no doubts.

Now our young man has become king,
Who has directed his mind, his attention
Neither to dogs nor birds;
Rather night and day he plans
How to destroy the enemies
Of the faith; there he put his heart,
His delight, his pleasure;
Without question, it is the sum of his desire
And led to a virtuous and noble accomplishment.
During the first year of his reign
He set out for Armenia.
There he captured by force and might
A fortified town named Gorhigos.
And I'll tell you about it, short and sweet.
The stronghold was tributary to the Turks,
A great and powerful place, fortified and secure
With its moat, its towers, its walls.
But to the sword that cuts well
Fell everything from tower to foundation.
There he bore himself so fiercely
That every man he came upon was killed.
There he proved himself for the first time.

What did he do that second year
After the crown had been given him?
He journeyed along with his host
Across the high seas by ship
Until he appeared before Adalia,
A city that is in Turkey,
Magnificent and powerful and secure and strong;
But there was no wall, no gate,
No host able to prevent
The good king coming to capture,
Destroy, and put it to the sword;
He had the whole city torched and burned.
There to be seen was many a silken cloth
Of pure gold that gleamed
As it burned, and many a beautiful woman,
Many a Saracen, many a young girl,
Many a Turk, and many a child too who perished
By fire or was cut down by the sword.
Afterward he returned to his own land
So he set out on no more expeditions elsewhere.

Et au tiers an sapparilla
com cils qui jour et nuit veilla
comment il se porroit chevir
pour ce saint passage assevir
si a la haute mer passee
et vint en france la loee
mais il passa par court de romme
la ot mainte honneur cest la somme
car li papes premierement
li cardinal secondement
tout le clergie · tous les prelas
et li pueples a grant solas
et a grant joie le veirent
et plus grant honneur li feirent
plus de douceur plus de loange
quonques mais a roy si estrange
quil estoit de si longue marche
quaus sarrazins ses pais marche
la fu jehans li roys de france
qui maint anui mainte souffrance
avoit receu pour la guerre
quil avoit au roy dangleterre
par le deffaut de maint couart
et li roys angles audouart
avoit a nom je nen doubt mie cccxiiiV
plus nen di je suis de partie
mais ne vueil pas faire lonc conte
cils nobles rois dont je vous conte
moustra son fait devers leglise
par tel maniere et par tel guise
si bien si bel si sagement
et si tres honnourablement
et aussi au roy des francois
qui estoit la presens · queinsois
quil partissent · il se croisierent
et le saint passage vouerent
et maint autre vaillant preudomme
quen ce livre ci pas ne nomme
par lordenance dou saint pere
et des cardinaus · qui sont frere
car li sains peres ordonna
et tels indulgences donna
que tous ceuls qui se croiseroient
et qui avec euls en iroient
sont absols de coupe et de peinne
et si fist le roy cheveteinne
de france de toute larmee
que leglise avoit ordonee
le cardinal de pierregort

And in his third year he busied himself,
Like someone who sleeps little day or night,
About planning how he could
Manage succeeding with the holy passage.
So he traveled over the high seas
And came to France, a land of praise.
But he passed through the court of Rome,
Where he was accorded many honors, to tell it all,
For at first the pope,
And second the cardinals,
And then all the clergy, all the prelates,
And the people too looked upon him
With great joy and much pleasure,
And bestowed upon him greater honors,
More kind treatment, more praise
Than any foreign king had received before.
For he was from a far-off frontier land
Since his country bordered the Saracens.
Jean, king of France, was there,
A man who had endured much heartache,
Great suffering because of the war
He had with the king of England,
Because of the betrayal of many a coward.
And the name of the English king
Was Edward, of this I have no doubt.
I'll say no more of him; I have my own allegiance,
But do not wish to make the story long.
This noble king whom I have been discussing
Presented his case to the church
In a manner and fashion that was
So good, so virtuous, so wise,
And so very honorable,
And also to the king of France,
Who was there present, that before
They departed, they took the cross.
And vowed themselves to the holy passage,
As did many another valiant nobleman
Whom I do not name in this book,
According to the ordinance of the holy father
And the cardinals, who are brothers.
For the holy father brought it about
And bestowed the appropriate indulgences,
So that all who took the cross
Or would make the journey with them
Were absolved of guilt and temporal punishment;
And he appointed the king of France
Commander of all the host
That the church had ordained.
The cardinal of Périgord

pour les nostres donner confort
pour adrecier leur conscience
rassorre et donner penitence
fu legas en ceste besongne
car cest un homs qui bien besongne
et tant honnoure la crois ha
quavec les .ii. roys se croisa
briefment par la vertu divine
cils nobles roys en brief termine
si bien et si bel besongna
et si bien fait sa besongne a
vers le pape et vers les signours
quil besongna plus en .iii. jours
quil ne cuidoit faire en .iii. ans
quar li dieus qui est tous puissans
par grace li volt tant aidier
quil fausist a bien souhaidier
et pour le roy quil trouva la
quant a la court de romme ala
car on tient que li rois de france
ha plus quautres roys de puissance
mais fortune qui tost deffait
quant il li plaist ce quelle a fait
et qui onques ne tient couvent
car sa couvenance est tout vent
li joua dun tour descremie
dou quel il ne se doubtoit mie
car de vie a trespassement
li roys de france ala briefment
et aussi fist li cardinaus
qui en ce fait estoit legaus
dont ce fu pitez et damages
car li sains et devos passages
en fu tous au recommencier
car on se devoit adrecier
a ces .ii. par especial
comme a seigneurs · et court royal
si en ploura parfondement
et souspira moult durement
le tres gentil et noble roy
et en fu en moult grant effroy
quant tout ce estoit empeschie
qua grant peinne avoit pourchacie
mais ne laissa pas son emprise
pour fortune qui riens ne prise
qui par son faus tour a deffait
tout ce quil avoit quis et fait
ne pour la mort dou roy de france
ne dou cardinal · quesperence

Was to act as the legate on this expedition
In order to give our men consolation,
To help clear their consciences,
To confirm their faith and assign penance.
For he was a man quite skilled in such matters
And had greatly honored the cross,
Which he had taken along with the two kings,
To be brief, through the power of God.
This noble king in a short time
Acted so ably and expertly,
Worked at his task so skillfully
With the pope and the great lords
That he accomplished more in three days
Than he had hoped to do in three years.
For the God Who is all powerful
Through His grace did intend to help him so much
That he should lack anything more to desire,
And in regard to the king whom he found there
When he traveled to the court of Rome;
For it is considered that the king of France
Is more powerful than other monarchs.
But Fortune, who quickly undoes
When she pleases what she has brought to pass,
And never holds to any agreement
—For her bargains are all wind
—Dealt him a crafty stroke
That he was not expecting at all.
For from this life to the next,
The king of France suddenly passed,
As also did the cardinal
Who had for this mission been appointed legate.
And this was a misfortune and pity
For the holy and devout passage
Was right at the point of beginning again;
For these two commanded
Very great respect
Since they were high lords and of the royal court.
Thus he lamented them deeply
And grieved very painfully for
That very noble and genteel king,
And he was also greatly upset therefore
Since all had been forestalled
That had been set in motion with great pains.
But he did not abandon his enterprise
Because of Fortune, who values nothing,
Who with her false turning had undone
Everything he had striven for and accomplished;
Nor because of the death of the king of France,
Or that of the cardinal, for he had hope

avoit en dieu et ferme foy
que dieus seroit ades pour soy
or vous diray le bon confort
quil prist en son grant desconfort

Li roys jehans dont dieus ait lame
ot espouse la milleur dame
quon peust trouver en ce monde cccxiiiiR
car dorgueil estoit pure et monde
et sot quan que nature donne
de bien · ce fu ma dame bonne
bien le say car moult la servi
mais onques si bonne ne vi
fille yert dou bon roy de behaingne
qui fist son fil roy dalemaingne
et empereur par sa vaillance
et par son scens et sa prudence
tout maugre loys de baiviere
qui adont empereres yere
car de lempire la desmis
par force darmes et damis
cils behaingnons dont je vous conte
not pareil duc · ne roy · ne conte
ne depuis le temps charlemeinne
ne fu homs cest chose certeinne
qui fust en tous cas plus parfais
en honneurs en dis et en fais
je fu ses clers ans plus de .xxx.
si congnui ses meurs et sententе
sonneur son bien sa gentillesse
son hardement et sa largesse
car jestoie ses secretaires
en trestous ses plus gros affaires
sen puis parler plus clerement
que maint autre et plus proprement

De ceste dame de haut pris
ot li roys jehans .iiii. fils
qui tuit estoient dus clamez
moult furent prisiez et amez
charles · loeys · jehan · phelippe
qui moult en armes se delite
charles lainnes de normendie
fu dus · et sot la signourie
de vienne · quil fu dalphins
et sestoit tant nobles et fins
que nature ne saroit faire
.i. homme de milleur affaire
coronnez a rems la cite

In God and an unshaken faith
That God would always be on his side.
Now I'll relate the fitting consolation
That he discovered in his great disappointment.

King Jean—and may God save his soul
—Had wed the finest lady
Who could be found anywhere in this world,
For she was devoid and free of pride,
And she knew whatever Nature bestows
In the way of good things; this was my lady Bonne.
I knew her well, having performed much service for her.
But never did I lay eyes on any woman this "good."
She was daughter to the good king of Bohemia,
Who made his son the king of Germany,
And emperor too because of his courage,
Because of his intelligence and prudence,
All in spite of Louis the Bavarian,
Who then was the emperor.
Yet from the empire King Jean drove that man
Through the force of arms and his friends.
These Bohemians that I'm telling you about
Had no duke, or king, or count his equal;
Not since the time of Charlemagne
Had there been a man—and this is certain
—Who was in every way more perfect,
In his accomplishments, his words, and his deeds.
I was his clerk for more than thirty years
And knew well his manner and his beliefs,
His honor, his virtue, his gentility,
His courage and his generosity,
For I was then his secretary
In all his most important dealings.
Thus I can speak more properly
And truly about him than can many others.

From this lady of high rank
King Jean of France had four sons,
Who all were acclaimed duke,
Very respected they were and loved,
Charles, Louis, Jean, Philippe
Who takes great pleasure in arms.
Charles, the oldest, was duke
Of Normandy and held lordship
Over Vienne, for he was the dauphin.
And he was so noble and pure
That nature would be unable to fashion
A man of any higher estate.
He was crowned at the city of Reims,

fu le jour de la trinite
lan mil .ccc. .lxiiii.
ni vueil riens mettre ne rabatre
la ot moult riche baronnie
et moult noble chevalerie
et tant quon ne porroit trouver
nuls milleurs au bien esprouver
li roys pour qui ce livre fais
y fu · et moustra tous ses fais
au roy · et a sa baronnie
et leur requist tous que aye
li feissent au saint passage
les uns requeroit par linage
et les autres par amite
si com devant lay recite
dont grant plante li acorderent
et promirent et vouerent
quil yroient aveques li
sil nestoient enseveli
mais li roys qui avoit grant guerre
ne pooit issir de sa terre
quil ni heust trop grant damage
pour ce le saint pelerinage
nacorda pas · car trop eust
mespris sacorde li eust
et li bons roys qui me norri
dont li os sont piessa pourry
et dont lame est en paradis
disoit et recordoit toudis
que li homs fait grant vasselage
qui bien deffent son heritage
et quil nest assaus ne bataille
son li vuet tollir qui le vaille

A ceste coronation
qui fu apres lascention
.xvii. jours tous acomplis
ot cil roys de joustes le pris
et aussi les ala il querre
a bruges et en engleterre
et a paris et en gascongne cccxiiiiV
tout en pourchassant sa besongne
car en flandres fu longuement
ou il despendi largement
a ci grant labeur et grant peinne
a roy de terre si lonteinne
a ci grans frais a ci grant mise
quil passa la mer et tamise
et sercha mainte region

On Trinity day in the year
Thirteen hundred and sixty-four,
To which I will add or subtract nothing.
He held sway over a fine court
And a quite noble band of knights,
Such that there could be found
None better, were they put well to the proof.
The king for whom I compose this book
Was present then and informed the king of France
And his baronage of all his intentions.
And he asked every man for the assistance
That they might afford him in the holy passage.
Some he recruited by appeals to lineage,
And others by calling upon friendship,
Just as I have recounted above.
And the result was that a great many agreed,
And promised and vowed
That they would make the journey with him
If they were not put in the grave.
But the king, who was occupied with a great war,
Could not leave his land behind
Were he not to have much hurt
And for this reason he would not agree
To the holy passage, for had he
Accepted, he would have erred greatly.
And the good king who was my sustainer,
Whose bones moldered many years ago,
And whose soul is in paradise,
Always said and maintained
That it is the highest form of courage
For a man to defend his rightful lands,
And to the end that no assault or attack
By anyone seeking to seize them should avail.

At the coronation, which took place
When seventeen days had run their course
After the Feast of the Ascension,
This king won the tournament.
And he went to seek out jousting
At Bruges and in England,
In Paris and in Gascony,
All in pursuit of his main goal.
He passed many days in Flanders,
Where he lived lavishly,
With great effort and many pains
For a king from a land so far off,
At such immense expense, in such grand style,
For he crossed both the sea and the Thames
And sought throughout many a region

pour avoir son entention
et quant il estoit bien armez
bien montez et bien acesmes
la lance eu pong lescut au col
il ni avoit sage ne fol
qui ne deist a grant murmure
cil roys fu nez en larmeure
tant estoit gens · joins · lons et drois
hardis puissans en tous endrois
jamais ne refusast nelui
a peinnes veoit on que lui
car il estoit toudis errans
puis ci puis la dessus les rans
il sen venoit lance sous fautre
sabatoit lun ci et la lautre
encontre lui riens ne duroit
de son bien chascuns murmuroit
et se seingnoit de la merveille
chascuns de son bien se merveille
et je meismes men merveil
quant a li pense et je mesviel

Au departir de ceste feste
y tourna son frainc et sa teste
si comme homs qui riens ne ressongne
tout droit au chemin de coulongne
et la fist .ii. mois de sejour
en besongnant de jour en jour
puis passa le franc et duringue
et ala par mi esselingue
tant fist quil vint a erefort
une cite puissant et fort
seant en biau plain sans montaingne
tout droit en fin cuer dalemaingne
aus contes et aus chevaliers
aus bourgois et aus escuiers
moustra son emprise et son fait
et dist tout ce quil avoit fait
es lieus ou il avoit este
bien .ii. yvers et .i. este
si que pluseurs li acorderent
ce quil requist si se croisierent
car par trop grant devotion
leur moustroit son entention
de la il sen ala en misse
ou maint buef et mainte genisse
ont este tollu et emble
et si despent on moult en ble
car maint y a qui se renvoise

What was needed to fulfill his goal.
And whenever he was fully armed,
Well mounted, with his equipment in order,
The lance in his fist, the shield around his neck,
There was no one, wise man or fool,
Who didn't say and loudly:
"The king was born in his armor."
He was so noble, elegant, tall, and straight,
Brave, powerful in every respect.
He refused combat to no man.
In fact, it was difficult to glimpse him
Because the man was always on the move,
First here, then there, in the lists.
He rode with his lance mounted,
Threw down one man here, then another there.
No one could stand up to him.
Everyone spoke of his virtue,
And crossed themselves for the miracle's sake.
Every man found his virtue remarkable,
And I marvel myself about all this
When I think about him, and I am moved.

Departing from this feast,
He turned his bridle and his head,
Just like a man who fears nothing,
Right down the road to Cologne.
There he stayed two months,
Conducting his affairs day after day.
Then he passed through Franconia and Thuringia,
And traveled through Esslingen as well.
Afterward he proceeded to Erfurt,
A city powerful and strong,
Sited amidst a beautiful plain with no mountains,
Right there in the very heart of Germany.
He made known his enterprise and plans
To counts and knights,
To burgesses and squires,
And told them all he had accomplished
In the places he had been
For two winters and a summer.
So that indeed a number said yes
To what he requested and took the cross
Because with his immense devotion
He showed them his resolve.
From there he proceeded to Meissen,
Where many sheep and cattle
Had been stolen and taken away.
And wheat is very important in that place
Because there's many a man who takes pleasure

en buvant godale et servoise
et si a moult bonnes gens darmes
biaus chevaliers et beles dames
si a tant cerchie et tant quis
quil trouva le gentil marquis
qui sires estoit dou pais
mais il ne fu pas esbahis
de li requerir humblement
confort et aide ensement
en lui disant tout son affaire
et tout ce quil avoit a faire

Quant li roys ot fait sa requeste
li marquis par maniere honneste
li respondi moult sagement
sire bien ay oy comment
le saint voiage avez empris
dont je vous lo forment et pris
si que a moy me conseilleray
et seur piez vous responderay
vous alez devers lempereur
de romme · qui est mon signeur
si que a li me conformeray
car ce quil fera je feray
pas ne di que si grandement cccxvR
le face · comme il vraiement
mais je vous promes et ottroie
qua mon pooir feray la voie
aveques vous pour dieu servir
et pour sa grace desservir
se lempereres lentreprent
en qui chascuns honneur aprent
li roys forment le mercia
de ce que respondu li a
et bien le devoit mercier
car li marquis a festier
le prist · et li donna preu dons
com vaillans princes et preudons
de la sen ala en sassongne
com cils qui ne pense ne songne
a chose qui puist avenir
qua honneur ou il vuet venir
le duc trouva en une marche
qui a lubecque tient et marche
si li dist tout ce quil queroit
et daide le requeroit
si com bien faire le savoit
et com dieux apris li avoit
li dus commenca a sousrire

In drinking ale and beer.
Many good men at arms live in the land,
Handsome knights and pretty ladies too.
And he searched and sought until
He came upon the noble margrave,
Who was lord of all the country.
But he was not reluctant at all
To entreat this man humbly
For aid and comfort in this regard,
Telling him all his plans
And all that he had to accomplish.

When the king had made his request,
The margrave, in an honest fashion,
Answered him quite wisely
"Sir, I've heard much about how
You've undertaken the holy passage,
And I praise and esteem you greatly therefore.
So I'll make this decision myself
And give you an answer here on my feet.
You are going to the Emperor
Of Rome, who is my lord,
So I will do as he decides,
For what he does so will I as well.
I'm not saying I can do anything
As grandly as he, truly not.
But I promise you and agree
To make the journey as best I can,
Along with you in order to serve God
And also to merit His grace
If the emperor undertakes this,
A man from whom every other learns honor."
The king thanked him heartily
For the answer he had given him.
And well he should be grateful
For the margrave ordered a celebration
In his honor and bestowed upon him fitting gifts,
Like a worthy prince and nobleman.
From there he made his way to Saxony
As if he had no thought or care
About anything that might happen
Save the honor he sought to obtain.
He found the duke in the frontier land
That belongs to and borders on Lübeck.
And he told him all he was after
And asked the man for help,
Just as he knew quite well to do
And how God had instructed him.
The duke, who was an elector

qui fu esliseur de lempire
et respondi courtoisement
sire je voy certeinnement
vostre tres bonne volente
se diex me doint joie et sante
moult avez entrepris grant chose
hardis est cils qui penser ose
a si tres haute ouevre parfaire
dieux la vous doint a bon chief traire
aler volez vers lempereur
qui est mon oncle et mon signeur
et je vous feray compaingnie
car la sans moy nirez vous mie
si useray de son conseil
qua li volentiers me conseil
li dus richement lonnoura
et .viii. jours o li demoura
se li donna de ses jouiaus
dor et dargent riches et biaus
harnas a jouster et destrier
ou ne faloit selle nestrier
car li rois joustoit volentiers
et li plaisoit tant li mestiers
et par tout si bien le faisoit
qua tous et a toutes plaisoit
au .ix^{e}. jour se partirent
et leur voie et chemin prenirent
tout droit a prague une cite
qui est de grant auctorite
li empereres y demeure
que dieux aimme prise et honneure
quon ne tient pas quen tout le monde
ait prince ou tant de bien habunde
et cest ses propres heritages
si fait dou demourer que sages
et lempereris ensement
y demeurent communement
si vous parleray de sa vie
car nest pas drois que je loublie

On ne porroit en nulle terre
nul plus sage homme de li querre
con dit ca et dela les mons
que cest li secons salemons
il aimme dieu et sainte eglise
honneure · crient · et sert et prise
justice en la balance poise
a cui quil plaise ne qui poise
ni regarde amour ne haine

Of the empire, began to laugh
And responded with courtesy:
"Sir, I see for certain
You are a man of good will,
So God give me joy and good health.
What you have so ably undertaken is a great thing.
The man is brave who dares to think
Of accomplishing such a sacred task.
May God grant that you are able to succeed.
You intend going to the emperor,
Who is my uncle and also my lord.
I will be your companion since
You cannot go there otherwise.
So I will do as he instructs,
For I am glad to seek out his advice."
The duke paid rich honors to the king
And remained with him eight days.
And he gave him some of his precious things,
Which were of gold and silver, beautiful and rich,
Armor for jousting and a steed as well,
Which lacked neither saddle nor stirrups.
For the king was an eager jouster
And the sport gave him much pleasure,
And he did so well with it everywhere
It pleased everyone, men and women alike.
On the ninth day they parted
And took their way and path
Straight to Prague, a city
That has great importance.
There the emperor makes his home,
A man whom God loves, honors, and esteems;
For in all the world no one considers
That any other prince is so filled with virtue.
And this is his fitting inheritance.
He reigned like a wise man,
And the empress did also
—There they reigned together.
I'll say something of his life
Because it is not right I should neglect him.

In no land could be found
A man more prudent than him.
People there and across the mountains too say
He's the second Solomon in fact.
He loves God, and holy church
He honors, respects, serves, and esteems.
He balances the scales of justice
No matter who might be pleased or angered;
And he is affected by neither love nor hate,

frere · fil · voisin ne voisine
grant ne petit · car egalment
la fait a tous et loyaument
si que pour ce en pais se repose
que nuls contre lui ne soppose
pluseurs eglises a fondees
qui sont moult richement doees
chartreus · mendiens · et chanoinnes CCCXVV
nonnains emmurees et moinnes
il nest felons ne despiteus ·
einsois est humbles et piteus
plus que turture ne colombele
namis vrais a samie bele
nil nest homme qui vers li aille
qui par tout ce non ne li baille
quonques si humble creature
a tous ne pot former nature
selonc son scens et sa richesse
sa grant puissance et sa noblesse
ne sont pas chier si vestement
bien se vuet tenir nettement
mais de cointise ne li chaut
puis quil sont a lui bon et chaut
il ne vuet pas fole largesse
ne eschersete qui trop blesse
lonneur de tout prince terrien
et pour ce se tient au moien
jamais ne greveroit personne
pour nulle chose tant fust bonne
einsois garde et norrit ses gens
sans estre mengies de sergens
il aimme bien ses bons amis
et si het fort ses annemis
car voisin na sil li meffait
quil ne soit amendes de fait
pais a mise par toute alemaingne
en osteriche et en behaingne
en misce · en baiviere · en hongrie
jusques es marches de russie
en morave en prusce · en cracoe
voire par dieu jusque en lestoe
au mains jusques en ranguenite
qui nest mie chose petite
en poulainne et en pommerelle
en brandebourc cest chose bele
quon y porte par saint germain
seurement lor en la main
et je vi que nuls ni savoit
aler se grant conduit navoit

Nor whether it's a brother, son, neighbor,
Someone of high degree or low; rather he treats
Every man equally and fairly.
And for this reason he lives in peace,
For no man thinks to oppose him.
He has established a number of churches
That are quite richly endowed,
Charter houses, foundations for friars and canons,
Cloistered nuns and monks as well.
He is neither cruel nor disrespectful,
But is humble and sympathetic,
More than the turtle or dove,
More than a lover toward his pretty lady.
There's no man who ever goes to see him
Who doesn't everywhere grant him this distinction:
That never could Nature fashion
A person this humble toward everyone
In accord with his intelligence and high degree,
His great power and his nobility.
Nor are his clothes expensive;
He desires very much to be presentable,
But he cares nothing for finery,
As long as his garments are good and warm.
He does not favor foolish generosity
Or avarice, which greatly mars
The honor of any worldly prince.
And so he holds to the middle way.
The emperor would never injure a man
For any reason, however good it might be,
But rather safeguards and sustains his household,
Without being ruined by servants.
He loves well his good friends
And fervently hates his enemies.
For he has no neighbor who if he does him wrong
Does not in fact find his misdeed punished.
He has brought peace to all of Germany,
To Austria and to Bohemia,
To Munich, Bavaria, and Hungary
As far as the Russian marches,
To Moravia, Prussia, and Cracow,
Truly, by God, as far as Estonia,
At least to the region of Ranguenite,
And this is no small achievement;
Also to Poland and Pomerania,
To Brandenburg, and it's a fine thing
That a man can there carry gold in his open hand
All in safety, by St. Germain.
And I did see that no one formerly was able to
Travel there had he not a strong escort.

son pais de .xvi. journees
ha creu et longues et lees
or querez signeur qui ce face
et qui tant ait honneur et grace
je ne le say se diex me gart
entre les crestiens nautre part
mais on le tient au plus riche homme
de crestiente · cest la somme
fils fu dou bon roy de behaingne
dont dieus ait lame en sa compaingne
si quil a bien a qui retraire
donneur querir et de bien faire

Sil est qui fait il est qui dit
lempereur quay mis en mon dit
estoit a prague en sa maison
on li dist et cestoit raison
que uns roys qui moult se doit amer
venoit a lui doutre la mer
pour li veoir et acointier
et pour ce quil voloit traitier
comment il li feist aye
de gens · davoir · ou de navie
pour le tres saint pelerinage
quon appelle le saint passage
car cils roys lavoit entrepris
et quil aroit honneur · et pris
se o lui le voloit entreprendre
li empereres sans attendre
quant il oy ceste nouvelle
qui li fu aggreable et belle
quen son cuer moult se resjoy
si tost com la nouvelle oy
ses gens et ses barons manda
et en leure leur commanda
quil fussent tost aparilliez
tous montez et tous abilliez
qualer li voloit a lencontre
son clergie manda et leur montre
que il facent processions cccxviR
de toutes les religions
queinsi vuet le roy recevoir
pour faire envers li son devoir

Plus dune grant demi journee
qui fu a bonne heure adjournee
a lencontre li est alez
mais li champs furent bien balez
car il furent plus de .xx. mille

His lands are broad and long,
The space of sixteen days' journey!
Now find another lord who's done the same
And possesses this much honor and grace.
I could not, so help me God,
Among Christian peoples or elsewhere,
For he's thought the most powerful man
In all Christendom—that's the truth of it.
He was the son of the good king of Bohemia
(And God keep that man's soul in His company!)
So he certainly has what he can fall back upon
To seek honor and do what's right.

If someone acts, another speaks of it.
The emperor I've mentioned in this work
Was in Prague at his residence.
He was told, and rightfully so,
That a king who did much to be well loved
Had come to him from across the sea
To see and meet with him,
And also because he wished to discuss
How the emperor might provide him assistance
With soldiers, with money, and with ships
For that very sanctified pilgrimage
That is called the holy passage
Because this king had undertaken it;
And the emperor would gain honor and praise
Should he agree to undertake it with him.
The emperor, without hesitation,
When he heard this news,
Which he thought pleasant and welcome
(For he rejoiced mightily in his heart
The very minute he was informed),
Summoned his people and his barons
And commanded them at once
To make themselves quickly ready,
All mounted on their horses and dressed,
Because he wished to go meet the man.
He sent for his clergy and ordered
Them to make a procession
Of all those of the religious estate
Because in this manner he wished to greet
Him and do his duty toward him.

To meet the man, he traveled
More than half a good day's journey
And arose early that morning.
And yet the fields were well winnowed
For more than twenty thousand were present

qui tuit issirent de la ville
quant li .ii. signeur sencontrerent
courtoisement se saluerent
et sen venirent doy a doy
lempereur dist foy que je doy
lespee de saint charlemainne
qui lempire ot en son demainne
qui tramble quant on la tient nue
jay grant joie de vo venue
et vous soiez li bien venus
et a grant joie receus
li roy le mercia forment
courtoisement et humblement
einsi ensamble chevauchierent
jusques atant quil aprochierent
les processions qui venoient
et hympnes et respons chantoient
et estoient tous revestis
li chanoinnes grans et petis
richement de chapes de soie
tant fu receus a grant joie
tant aourez tant conjois
que depuis le temps s. loys
quant en france revint de tunes
et quil ot trespasse les dunes
de la mer ne fu telement
roys veus · ne si richement

Il le mena en son chastel
sus roche · taillie a sisel
la trouverent lempereris
dont plus liez fu leur esperis
quelle avoit en sa compaingnie
dont elle estoit acompaingnie
maintes riches et nobles dames
dont dieus gart les corps et les ames
qui estoient si acesmees
ei si tres richement parees
de grans biautes de grans richesses
que toutes sambloient deesses
la fu liement receus
honnourez · servis · et veus
fu delles en fais et en dis
que ce li sambloit paradis
nailleurs ne vosist jamais estre
fors en ce paradis terrestre
la avoit de tous instrumens
et saucuns me disoit tu mens
je vous diray les propres noms

Since everyone had come out from the city.
When the two lords did meet,
They greeted each other courteously
And proceeded hand in hand.
The emperor said: "By the faith I owe
The sword of holy Charlemagne,
Who ruled the empire as his domain,
A sword that shakes when held unsheathed,
I am very happy you have come;
Here you are most welcome
And received with great joy."
The king thanked him heartily,
Courteously, and with humility.
In this fashion they rode on together
Long enough until they approached
Those in the procession who were coming along,
And they were singing hymns and responses.
And all the canons, both high and low,
Were dressed quite richly
In cloaks of silk cloth.
He was greeted with such rejoicing,
Was so esteemed, so celebrated
That since the time of St. Louis,
When he returned from Tunis to France
And had made his way across the sand dunes
By the sea, no king had in this fashion,
In such grand style been received.

The emperor led him into his castle,
Carved into the rocks by the chisel.
There they found the empress,
Which brightened both their spirits
Because among her personal retinue
She was accompanied by
Many high born and noble women
—God save their bodies and souls!
—Who were so attired
And so very richly provided with
Great beauty, with precious things
They seemed goddesses, every one.
There he was joyfully received,
Honored, served, and looked after
By the women, in both word and deed,
And so he thought this paradise itself.
Nor did he wish ever to be
Anywhere but in this earthly heaven.
Instruments of all kinds were playing,
And in case any man should say "you lie,"
I will relate to you the various names

quil avoient et les seurnons
au meins ceuls dont jay congnoissance
se faire le puis sans ventance
et de tous instrumens le roy
diray premiers si com je croy

Orgues · vielles · micanons
rubebes et psaltarions
leus · moraches et guiternes
dont on joue par ces tavernes
cymbales · citoles · naquaires
et de flaios plus de .x. paires
cest a dire de .xx. manieres
tant des fortes com des legieres
cors sarrasinois et doussainnes
tabours · flaustes traverseinnes
demi doussainnes et flaustes
dont droit joues quant tu flaustes
trompes · buisines et trompettes
guigues · rotes · harpes chevrettes
cornemuses et chalemelles
muses daussay riches et belles
eles · fretiaus · et monocorde
qui a tous instrumens sacorde
muse de ble quon prent en terre cccxviV
trepie · leschaquier dengletere
chiphonie · flaios de saus
et si avoit pluseurs consaus
darmes · damour et de sa gent ·
qui estoient courtois et gent
mais toutes les cloches sonnoient
qui si tres grant noise menoient
que cestoit une grant merveille
li roys de ce moult se merveille
et dit quonques mais en sa vie
ne vit si tres grant melodie

Quant il fu heure de mengier
il se partirent sans dangier
et sen alerent en la sale
qui nestoit villeinne ne sale
paree estoit de dras de soie
et de fin or qui reflamboie
et sen aloient .ii. et deus
mais il ni avoit nesun deus
ne delles · qui chiere joieuse
neust · et pensee amoureuse
et quant la viande fu preste
la vinrent li clerc et li preste

They properly have, their second names too,
At least the ones that I have knowledge of,
If I can bring this off without boasting.
And I will name first the king
Of all instruments, in my opinion.

Organs, violas, and micanons,
Ruhebes and psalteries,
Lutes, mandolins, and guitars,
Such as are played in taverns,
Cymbals, zithers, and nackers,
And more than ten pairs of
Little flutes, that is twenty kinds,
As many of low as of high pitch,
Saracen horns and doucines,
Tambors, transverse flutes,
Demi-doucines and hornpipes,
Which you play correctly when you blow in them,
Trumps, trumpets, and coronets,
Viols, rotae, harps, bagpipes,
Cornemuses and reed pipes;
Aussay musettes, rich and pretty,
And horn pipes and the monochord,
Which harmonizes with all instruments,
Bagpipes made from the corn one harvests,
The English eschiquier, the tripod,
The hurdy-gurdy, the flute for jumping.
And there was much talk
Of arms, of love, and of his people,
Who were courteous and noble.
But then all the bells rang,
Which made such a loud noise
That it was quite a miraculous thing.
The king marveled greatly at this
And said that never in his life
Had he witnessed such wonderful melody.

When it was time to eat,
They departed without trouble
And went into the hall,
Which was hardly dirty or ugly.
It was decorated with silken cloth
And with pure gold that gleamed.
And they went in two by two.
Yet there was not a single man
Or lady who was not pleased
And had thoughts of romance.
And when the meal was ready,
The clerks and priests entered,

et dirent benedicte
lempereur par grant amite
prist le roy et le fist seoir
a lonneur pour lui mieus veoir
des viandes dont servi furent
largement · et de vin quil burent
me tais · car je ne les diroie
sun jour tout entier y pensoie
apres dinner tout li signeur
dedens la chambre lempereur
se retreirent tuit ensamble
et lempereris ce me samble
dedens la chambre sen ala
et toutes les dames quelle a
quant li roys vit quil fu a point
de parler · il natendi point
eins moustra sagement son fait
et lemprise quil avoit fait
en querant aide et confort
et tous les en pria moult fort
si sagement et par tel guise
que chascuns deuls len loe et prise

Lempereur qui sages estoit
devant le roy en piez estoit
si respondi assez briefment
sire bien ay oy comment
vous avez empris ceste voie
dieus la vous doint finer a joie
car vraiement cest uns grans fais
ne je nulle doubte ni fais
que moult grant peinne et moult grant mise
grant ordenance grant devise
grant cuer · grant scens · et grant avis
ne couveingne ce mest avis
daler en si lointeinne terre
pour la subjuguer et conquerre
car li annemy de no loy
sont moult fort si com dire loy
et tant quon ne les puet nombrer
tant sen sceust clerc encombrer
si se couvient bien consillier
ymaginer · penser · veillier
comment ceste chose se face
si qua sonneur dieus la parface
car sans li ne se porroit faire
homs ne doit penser le contraire
si vous diray que je feray
mes messages envoieray

And they said the benediction.
With great affection the emperor
Escorted the king and had him sit
In the place of honor so he could be better seen.
Of the food they were generously
Served, and the wine which they drank,
I'll be silent, for I could not describe
Everything, even devoting a day to the task.
After dinner, all the lords
Retired together in a group
To the emperor's chamber.
And the empress, it seems,
Went into her own apartment
Along with all of her ladies.
When the king saw it was time
For him to speak, he did not hesitate,
But prudently described his accomplishments
And the enterprise he had undertaken,
Requesting aid and comfort
As he pleaded quite forcefully with all present
In such a fashion and with such wisdom
That every man among them praised and esteemed him.

The emperor, who was a wise man,
Rose to his feet before the king.
And he answered in these few words:
"Sir, I am well informed about how
You have embarked upon this path.
May God grant you traverse it happily!
Yet truly this is an enormous undertaking,
And I do not doubt in fact
That much labor, a great deal of planning,
Competent leadership, substantial cunning,
Magnificent courage, high intelligence, and much wisdom
Are what's needed—or such is my thought
—To make a journey to a far-off land
So that it can be conquered and subjugated.
For those who are enemies to our law
Are very strong, as I have heard tell,
And so many they cannot be numbered,
However diligently a clerk might try.
Thus much counsel must be sought,
Much planning, thinking, and deliberation done
About how the thing should be accomplished
So that God may bring it off to His honor,
For without Him it cannot come to pass.
No man should think the contrary.
And I'll say what I'll do.
I will have my messengers hasten

par devers le roy de hongrie
qui tient moult noble signorie
et devers le roy de poulainne
qui est de ce pais procheinne
si leur feray prier et dire
quil ne me vueillent escondire
destre ensamble une journee cccxviiR
par eaus et par moy ordennee
en cracoe la metterons
et se dieus plaist nous y serons
sans querir essoinne nalogne
pour parler de ceste besongne
car la matiere est grosse et grande
cest bien raison que on y entende
et quon la traite sagement
si quelle ait bon definement

Quant il ot fine sa parole
chascuns dit sagement parole
et li roys meismes le tesmongne
et li prie fort quil len songne
et il le fist sans contredit
tout ainsi comme il lavoit dit
quant lonc temps orent festie
dance · jouste · et tournie
on donna le pris au milleur
et le fist faire lempereur
si que le pris et la loange
fu donnee a ce roy estrange
car par sa lance et son escu
avoit tous les autres vaincu
ce fait de prague se partirent
or diray quel chemin il firent
par mi behaingne chevauchierent
.iii. journees et puis alerent
a bresselau a linguenise
a mustat a suedenisse
cousten · calix · bruton glagouve
passerent · et par basenouve
de la en cracoe arriverent
ou les roys dessusdis trouverent
qui a lencontre leur venirent
et moult grant joie leur feirent
comment il furent receu
honnoure · servi · et peu
de pain de vin et de vitaille
de toute volille et daumaille
de poissons et dautre viande
il est moult fols qui le demande

To the king of Hungary,
Who holds a very noble lordship,
And to the king of Poland,
Who is from the neighboring territory.
And I will have it said to and requested of them
That they do not refuse me,
So that we meet together one day
To be determined by them and me.
We'll have this be in Cracow
And, please God, we will be there
Without experiencing difficulty or delay
So that we can discuss this enterprise.
For great and significant is the business.
This is good reason it be attended to
And discussed with wisdom,
So that it can be brought to a good end."

When he finished his speech,
Every man said: "Wisely spoken."
The king himself testified thereto
And asked him earnestly to arrange it.
The emperor did so without opposition,
In just the way he had described.
After they had made merry, danced,
Jousted, and tourneyed a long time,
The prize was given to the best man.
And the emperor arranged
That the award and its honor
Be granted this foreign king;
For with his lance and shield
He had thrown down all others.
This done, they departed from Prague.
Now I'll describe their route.
They rode through Bohemia
For three days and then proceeded to
Breslau, to Liegnitz,
To Neustadt, to Schweidnitz,
Kosten, Kaliz, Bythorn,
Glogau, Baranow they passed through;
From there they came to Cracow,
Where they found the kings mentioned above,
For these had come to meet them
And welcomed them with great joy.
And because they were received,
Honored, served, and feasted
With bread, with wine, and with food,
With the flesh of every bird and beast,
With fish and other delicacies,
The man was quite foolish who made a request,

quon ne le doit pas demander
pour ce quon ni puet amender
tant furent servi grandement
la ot .i. moult grant parlement
dont je me vueil orendroit taire
car ne le saroie retraire
mais finablement il conclurent
que tuit ensamble aidier li durent
si que la response diray
de chascun ja nen mentiray

Lempereur tout premierement
respondi bien et sagement
et promist aide et confort
et faveur de tout son effort
a ce saint voiage parfaire
et encor vorra il plus faire
que les esliseurs de lempire
voloit assambler tire a tire
et escrire a nostre saint pere
par coy sa diligense appere
aus princes aus communautes
qui sont si homme · et feautes
li doivent · pour eaus esmouvoir
si que quant on devra mouvoir
quil aient fait leur pourveance
pour aler y ou de finance
pour bailler a ceuls qui yront
et qui ceste ouevre asseviront
lempereur tantost commensa
et ses messages avansa
et ses lettres pour envoier
a ses subges sans detrier
car parfaite devotion
avoit a lexaltation
dou voiage et tant le desire
que bouche ne le porroit dire
quant lempereur ot respondu
li princes qui lont entendu
et tuit li autre de la place cccxviiV
dirent que dieux li ottroit grace
dou parfaire car vaillanment
a respondu et noblement

Apres fu le roy de hongrie
qui promist confort et aie
au passage et y mettera
quant li poins et li temps sera
son corps · sa chevance et dou sien

For one should not ask for something
Since no improvement was possible,
So grandly were they served.
And they held a quite grand conference
I intend passing over in silence,
For I am unable to describe it.
However in the end they there concluded
That everyone should help that king,
And so I will rehearse what each one
Said, and I will lie about nothing.

First of all, the emperor
Responded well and wisely,
And promised aid and comfort
And the favor of his wholehearted effort
Toward making this holy journey a success.
And indeed he intended doing even more
Because he wished to assemble the electors
Of the empire, one and all,
And write to our Holy Father
And thereby make known his enthusiasm
To the communes and to the princes,
Those who were his men and owed him
Fealty, in order to persuade them all;
So that when the time came to set out
They should have made their arrangements
For the journey there or for finance
To provide for those who would go along
And were to bring the task to completion.
The emperor began at once
To send his messengers ahead,
His letters too, which would be sent
To his subjects without delay.
For he possessed a perfect
Devotion to the exalted mission
Of the voyage, and so great was his desire
That no mouth could describe it.
When the emperor had responded,
The princes, who had heard him,
And every one else in the place
Said that God would grant him the grace
To succeed because he had responded
In a valiant and noble way.

Afterward it was the king of Hungary,
Who promised comfort and aid
For the passage, and would devote to it,
When the time and season came to pass,
His person, his fortune, and as much

autant comme autre roy crestien
einsi promist et voue la
devant tous ceus qui furent la

Apres fu le roy de poulainne
qui tint cracoe en son demainne
quil promist quil y aideroit
toutes les fois que poins seroit
au saint voiage mettre a fin
tres volentiers et de cuer fin
et tuit li prince qui la furent
li un vouent li autre jurent
que volentiers y aideront
et que leur pooir en feront

Quant il orent parlemente
longuement a leur volente
il feirent une ordenance
que cils roys iroit en presence
aus autres princes dalemaigne
car il est bon que de lui veingne
la requeste quil leur fera
et avec ce tout leur dira
ce quon a fait a lassamblee
qui en cracouve est assamblee
einsi li signeur lordenerent
mais einsois grans joustes crierent
car il le vuelent festier
de jouster et de tournier
briefment il jousterent ensamble
et lemperere ce me samble
jousta avec les autres roys
qui estoient en grans arrois
mais lestrange roy ot le pris
com des armes li mieus apris
au partir grant dons li donnerent
et longuement le convoierent
il prist congie chascuns savoie
en sa maison que vous diroie
il a tant serchie et tant quis
que les signeurs a tous requis
car il ni a ne duc ne conte
ne noble dont on face conte
quil ne priast et requeist
et que son fait ne li deist
et vraiement il les trouva
courtois · en ce quil leur rouva
car il ot response honnourable
qui li fu bele et aggreable

Of his possessions as the other Christian kings.
And this was what he promised and vowed
Before all who were there present.

Then it was the king of Poland,
Who ruled Cracow in his domain;
For he promised he would assist in this
Every time the occasion arrived
In order to make the holy voyage a success,
Quite willingly and with a pure heart.
And all the princes who were there present
Either vowed to join or promised
They would gladly assist in this
And do what lay within their power.

When they had held this parliament
For as long as they wished,
They did make an agreement
That this king should go personally
To all the other princes of Germany
For it was good that the request come from him
That he would make to them.
And, along with this, he would report
All that had been done at the assembly
That had been held in Cracow.
This is the agreement that the lords did make.
But first they proclaimed a grand tournament,
For they wanted to entertain him
With jousting and tourneying.
In short, they jousted together,
And the emperor, it seems to me,
Jousted against the other kings
Who were present in grand array.
But the foreign king got the prize
For being the most skilled at arms.
In parting, they gave him great gifts
And escorted him some distance.
He took his leave; each man set out
For his home. What more can I say?
He had so searched out and journeyed
That he had made his request to all the great lords,
For there was no count or duke,
No nobleman of any importance
Who was not asked along and solicited,
Who was not informed of his venture.
And truly the king found them
Courteous about what he asked from them,
For he received an honorable answer
That was pleasing and agreeable to him.

Or me couvient ce roy nommer
qui est venus doutre la mer
car raisons est que je vous nomme
le nom de si vaillant preudomme
et pour ce le vous nommeray
quassez plus aaise en rimeray
et se je lay mis autrement
et le mien au commancement
de ce livre par tel maniere
adieu ma vraie dame chiere
pour le milleur temps garde chier
honneur a vous quaim sans trichier
cest pour ce que chascuns na mie
scens de trouver tel muserie
de chipre et de jherusalem
fu roys · pierre lappella lem
or vous ay je nomme son nom
qui est et fu de grant renom
et sera sil joit de semprise
quil a a lonneur dieu emprise
et dieux li ottroit bonnement
quil sen traveille durement

Or chevauche li roys de chipre
qui nest pas vestus de drap dipre
mais dun drap dor fait a damas cccxviiiR
il nest remis preceus · ne mas
de sa besongne pourchacier
eins ne fait qualer et tracier
les signeurs par tout et querir
pour leur aide requerir
tant a erre par ses journees
par froit par chaut · et par jalees
qua vienne vint sus la noe
a .x. journees de cracoe
la trouva le duc dosteriche
.i. noble duc puissant et riche
qui estoit sires de la ville
et dou pais · et sachies quil le
recut si tres joieusement
et si tres amoureusement
et la duchesse en tel maniere
li fist si amiable chiere
et toutes les dames aussi
que je ne say pas nomer si
que raconter ne le savoie
tant menoit chascuns feste et joie
taire me vueil de leur mengier
car on ne porroit souhaidier

Now I need to the name the man
Who came from across the sea
Because it is fitting I reveal to you
The name of this valiant nobleman.
And so I will make known his name
And do so with much more ease in rhyming verse,
For I have recorded it in another fashion
Along with my own at the beginning
Of this work in the following:
"Farewell, my true lady dear,
Keep your thoughts on better times;
Honor to you whom I love without deception."
And I'm doing so because not every man
Has enough skill to solve such a puzzle.
Of Cyprus and of Jerusalem
He was the king; Pierre was he named.
Now I have uttered his name,
Which is and was of great renown,
And will be so if he succeeds at his enterprise,
Which he has undertaken in God's honor.
And God will grant this in fine fashion
Because he's laboring with such intensity.

Now the king of Cyprus rides on,
Not dressed in some common cloth,
But in golden raiment made in Damascus.
He is not discouraged, saddened, or wearied
In the pursuing of his goal.
Instead he only travels and seeks out
The great lords everywhere and looks for them
In order to request their assistance.
So far has he gone in his travels,
Through cold, through heat, through icy storms
That he arrives at Vienna on the Danube
At ten days journey from Cracow.
There he finds the duke of Austria,
A noble man, powerful and rich,
Who was lord of the town
And of the country around. And know that
He received him with much joy
And with great affection.
Quite similarly, the duchess
Acted in such a friendly way,
As also did all the noble ladies
Whose names I do not know,
That I cannot describe it.
Every one feasted much and made merry.
I'll keep silent about what they ate,
But no one could hope for better

mieus ne plus honnourablement
tant furent servi richement
quant mengie orent et beu
tant comme a chascun a pleu
tuit alerent en .i. retrait
ou li dus souvent se retrait
la avoit riche baronnie
et moult noble chevalerie
prelas · dux · contes · et marquis
li nobles rois les a requis
tous ensamble quant leure vint
que de son fait parler couvint
et si sagement sa requeste
fist · que chascuns en fist grant feste
la fu li roy de tous prisiez
et loez et auctorisiez
et dist chascuns que dieux lenvoie
pour faire ceste sainte voie
li dux parla tous li premiers
car il en estoit coustumiers
et vraiement bien afferoit
si li respondi quil feroit
einsi com li rois de hongrie
et de ce ne se doubtoit mie
quil penroit a lui exemplaire
et feroit ce quil vorroit faire
car il desiroit le passage
et le tres saint pelerinage

Li roys de bon cuer les mercie
de leur confort de leur aie
et de leur tres bonne response
quil ne prisoit pas meins une once
de la reponse des signeurs
qui en craco furent pluseurs
li roys volt dou duc congie prendre
mais li dus ne le volt entendre
einsois li dist a chiere lie
einsi ne partirez vous mie
quencor le voloit honnourer
et pour li faire demourer
fist crier joustes et tournois
et pluseurs autres esbanois
si fust hontes de li partir
sans cops de lance departir
la ot une feste si noble
que de mes en coustentinoble
not depuis .c. ans la pareille
dont chascuns forment se merveille

Or more honorable treatment,
So richly were they served.
When they had eaten and drunk
As much as they pleased,
All went to that private chamber
Where the duke often withdrew.
His court of knights was powerful,
The men at arms a quite honorable assembly,
Prelates, dukes, counts, and margraves.
The noble king made his appeal to them
All together when the time came,
Saying what he should of his accomplishments.
And he related his plans so wisely
That each man was happy to hear.
The king was there esteemed by all,
Lauded and respected;
And every man said may God speed him
In following this holy path.
It was the duke who spoke first,
For this was his custom,
Which truly was quite fitting.
And he answered that he would do
Just what the king of Hungary had agreed.
And in this regard he had no doubts
That he would follow his example
And he would be doing what he wished,
For he was eager to make the passage
And the very holy pilgrimage.

The king thanked them with all his heart
For their aid, for their comfort,
And for their very fine response,
Which he did not value one bit less
Than that of the several great lords
Who had been present in Cracow.
The king wished to take leave of the duke,
But the duke would not hear of it;
Instead, he said to him quite merrily:
"You'll not leave yet."
For he thought to pay him further honor,
And so, in order to make him remain,
Had a joust and tourney proclaimed,
And several other entertainments as well.
For he would have been ashamed for him to depart
Before the man delivered some lance blows.
There they held a festival so noble
That from Metz to Constantinople
The last century hadn't seen the like,
At which every man marveled,

ne qui fust si tres bien joustee
ne si cointement karolee
li roys forment se travilloit
ei li dus pensoit et veilloit
comment li roys fust bien armez
bien parez et bien acesmez
par quoy li roys si bien joustast
que devant tous le forjoustast
et il le fist si vaillanment cccxviiiV
si bien · si honnourablement
si bien jousta et tournoya
que mieus faisant de lui ni a
si que lonneur li fu donnee
et le pris de ceste journee
apres li dus et la duchess
dons donneur et de grant richesse
li donnerent a grant plante
et li rois de grant volente
comme sages courtois et frans
la valeur de .x. mille frans
eins que de la fust departis
furent donnez et departis
car de leurs dons riens ne retint
fors .i. gerfaut que souvent tint
seur son poing · car trop bien voloit
pour ce donner ne le voloit
et savoit la plume plus blanche
que nest la noif dessus la branche
pour ce lama fort et prisa
apres tout ce congie pris a
dou duc et de la compaingnie
si se parti a chiere lie
ne mais gaires narrestera
jusques en venise sera
or deviseray son chemin
par escript en ce parchemin
il sen ala en quaranteinne
une duche qui est procheinne
des montaingnes de lombardie
et par ma foy je ne croy mie
quil ait au monde entierement
si fort pais · car vraiement
on y entre par .ii. destrois
qui sont rostes · lons et estrois
grans montaingnes a tout entour
et maint chastel et mainte tour
quon ne porroit miner ne prendre
tant bien y sceust on entendre
les .ii. perilleuses montaingnes

None at which the jousting was finer,
None at which the dancing was more elegant.
The king labored diligently,
And the duke noted and considered
How well armed the king was,
How well accoutered and well equipped;
And so he could joust so ably
He vanquished all comers in the tourney.
And this he did in such a valiant fashion,
In such an accomplished, honorable way
Jousted and tourneyed so skillfully
That no man did better than did he,
And thus he was accorded the honor
And the prize for this day.
Afterward the duke and the duchess
Bestowed upon him an abundance
Of gifts both honorable and quite rich.
And the king himself, with great enthusiasm,
Like a wise, courteous, and generous man,
Presented and gave away,
Before he left that place,
Goods worth ten thousand francs,
For he kept none of their presents,
Save a gerfalcon he often held
On his fist. For the bird he wanted very much
And thus did not wish to give it up.
It had feathers that were whiter
Than snow is on the branch.
So he loved the bird well, valuing it highly.
After all this, he took his leave
From the duke and those at his court.
And he departed with a cheerful demeanor
And will not sojourn anywhere
Until he will be in Venice.
Now I will trace out his path
In writing on this parchment.
He passed into Carinthia,
A duchy that borders on
The mountains of Lombardy.
And, upon my faith, I do not believe
That in the whole world there's any country
This strongly situated, for truly
Entrance is afforded by only two passes
That are rough, long, and narrow.
The region is surrounded by high mountains,
As well as by many castles, many towers
That cannot be mined or assaulted,
However skillfully one might proceed,
And two dangerous mountains,

qui sont arides et brehaingnes
le taure et le joure passa
et puis son chemin trespassa
par le pais et la contree
dou patriache daquilee
lombardie laissa a destre
et tint le chemin a senestre
toudis en costiant la mer
doit on bien tel signeur amer
qui de peinne et de haire a tant
pour avoir honneur quil atent
nest pas raisons que je vous mente
lan mil .ccc. .iiii. et sexante
de novembre lonsime jour
cils roy a qui dieux doint honnour
vint et arriva a venise
ou on laimme forment et prise
quant il aprocha la cite
li dux par moult grant amite
et li citoien de la ville
yssirent hors plus de .vi. mille
et li alerent a lencontre
chascuns samblant damours li montre
et li firent feste gringnour
qua leur droit naturel signour
en son hostel le convoierent
mout humblement lacompaignierent
grans dons et grans presens li firent
moult lamerent moult loubeirent
finablement que vous diroie
toute la cause de sa voie
leur dist · et les requist de gent
ou de navie ou dargent
pour le saint voiage assevir
car enuis sen porroit chevir
se il li refusient aye
especiaument de navie cccxixR
pour ce que moult de gent faudra
passer quant la saison vendra
que ceus qui sont en dieu creans
passeront sus les mescreans
si demanderent jour davis
.i. jour ou .ii. ce mest avis

Quant il furent bien consillie
ne vinrent pas comme essillie
pour faire leur response au roy
car moult furent de bon arroy
parez et vestis cointement

Which are arid and barren.
He crossed the Drava and the Sava,
And then directed himself
Through the countryside and lands
Of the patriarch of Aquileia.
He kept Lombardy on his right,
Took the road that lay to the left
And kept close at all times to the sea.
Shouldn't one esteem well such a lord
Who suffers so much pain and hardship
In order to obtain the honor he seeks?
I shouldn't fail to tell you the truth.
In the year thirteen hundred and sixty-four,
On the eleventh day of November,
This king, and may God give him honor,
Arrived and came to Venice,
Where he is loved and esteemed greatly.
When he drew near that city,
The duke, because of his great love,
And the citizens of the place
Poured forth, more than six thousand,
And they went out to greet him.
All demonstrated their esteem
And cheered him even more fervently
Than their true and natural sovereign.
They conveyed him to his residence;
In all humility they accompanied him,
Gave the man magnificent gifts and presents,
Esteemed him highly, were quite obedient to his will.
In the end what should I say?
He explained to them all his reasons
For the venture and asked for men,
Or for ships or for silver
In order to make the holy passage.
For he could hardly make a success of this
If they refused him aid,
Especially ships,
Because there were many men
To transport when the time should come
So that those who believe in God
Might move against the infidels.
And they asked for a day to consider,
A day or two, it seems to me.

After they had counseled at some length,
They did not appear in ragged clothes
To give the king their answer;
Instead they donned their fine array,
Were dressed and outfitted elegantly,

si bien · si bel · si richement
comme se fussent duc ou conte
et li roys qui tenoit grant conte
deaus · les sot moult bien recevoir
et leur response concevoir
et vesci ce quil respondirent
premierement il li offrirent
navie · quil delivreront
a tous ceuls qui passer vorront
et avec ce juste nol pris
et encor se bien lay compris
ayde faveur et confort
li roys les mercia moult fort
de leur aide et de leur offre
qui vaut dor fin tout plaine .i. coffre
voire par dieu .x. millions
car il nest mie nez li homs
qui mieus li peust recouvrer
de nefs · cest legier a prouver
je ne di pas que genevois
naient la huee et la vois
et tres grant puissance seur mer
ho la je nen vueil nuls blasmer
car comparisons hayneuses
sont ce dit on et perilleuses
de la se partirent atant
et li nobles roys qui entent
a son partir lui et sa gent
sen alerent par mer nagent
tout droit en lille de candie
pour attendre la baronnie
et les vaillans hommes qui vuelent
passer en surie sil puelent
pour nostre creatour servir
et pour sa grace desservir
.vi. mois entiers fu a venise
a grans despens et a grant mise
et sen parti en moys de may
si com laissie dire le may

Li roys · sa gent · et sa navie
et toute sa chevalerie
furent prest de monter en mer
or les vueille dieux tant amer
quil les vueille mener a port
de bien de joie · et de deport ·
et que au roy parface semprise
en tel maniere et en tel guise
quavoir en puist loange et gloire

As ably, as beautifully, as richly
As though they were all dukes or counts.
And the king, who was depending greatly
On them, knew how to receive them quite well
And listen to their response.
And here is the response they gave.
First, they offered him
Ships that they would make available
To all who wished to cross
And with this fairly valued freight,
And even more, if I've understood correctly,
Aid, good will, and comfort.
The king thanked them quite heartily
For their assistance and their offer,
Which was worth a chest full of pure gold,
Truly by God, more than even ten million such.
For there is no man born besides them
Who could better supply him
With ships; that's easy to prove.
I'm not saying that the Genoese
Don't have renown and say-so,
As well as great power on the sea.
Oh no, I don't want to insult anyone.
For comparisons are objectionable,
One might say, and risky.
In due time they parted.
And the noble king, who was attending
To the voyage, himself and his retinue too,
Went off sailing across the sea
Straight for the island of Candia
In order to await the noblemen
And the valiant knights who intended
Travelling to Syria if they could
In order to serve our Creator
And merit His grace.
Six months all together he was in Venice,
Spending much and living grandly,
And he departed in the month of May,
Just as I have allowed myself to say.

The king, his retinue, and his ships,
And all his knights as well,
Were ready to set sail on the sea.
Now let it please God He loves them enough
That he willingly guides them well to a harbor
Of virtue, of joy, of pleasure;
And that the king might succeed at his enterprise
In such a way and with such results
That he gains both glory and renown,

grace · honneur · triumphe et victoire
et que nostre foy essaucie
en soit honnouree et prisie

Li roys monta en sa galee
qui fu bien et bel aournee
si quil ni avoit nul deffaut
de tout ce quen galee faut
et toute sa gent ensement
entrerent ordeneement
dedens leurs vaissiaus sans atendre
or les vueille de mal deffendre
li dous jhesu cris par sa grace
car briefment seront en tel place
quil trouveront leurs anemis
mil contre .i. nil naront amis
fors dieu qui ses bons amis garde
par tout · et en fait bonne garde
mais dire vueil une merveille
dont maint preudomme se merveille
et je aussi si fort men merveil cccxixV
que je ne dor onques ne veil
sil men souvient que ne men seingne
et que penser ne mi couveingne
cils nobles rois dont je vous conte
toutes les fois quen sa nef monte
et il vient dedens la mer haute
il le couvient estre sans faute
malade si tres durement
et si tres perilleusement
quen la mer ja ne dormira
ne buvera ne mengera
jusques atant quil voise a terre
la puet il sa garison querre
et sil avient quil sesvertue
si fort · quil y boive ou mengue
hors le met car riens ni retient
si queinsi vivre le couvient
tant comme il est sus la marine
la se gist dessous sa courtine
tout einsi comme .i. homme mort
qui ne boit ne mengut · ne dort
et si tost comme a terre vient
preus haitiez · et garis devient
et sarme · et est en si bon point
quen li mal ne doleur na point
ne li vient il de grant corage
et de tres parfait vasselage
qui ce mortel peril ne doubte

As well as grace, honor, triumph, and victory.
And let our faith be exalted
By this deed, honored and esteemed!

The king embarked into his vessel,
Which was ably and well equipped,
So that it lacked nothing at all
Of what a galley has.
And all his army in turn
Entered in an orderly fashion
Into their own ships, not hesitating.
Now may Jesus Christ, through His grace,
Please defend them from evil
Because soon they will be where
They will encounter their enemies,
The odds a thousand to one, and they'll have no
Friends save God, who preserves His dear friends
In all things and takes care to safeguard them.
But I wish to relate a miracle to you,
At which many noblemen marveled.
And I am myself very much amazed,
For whether I sleep or wake
If I think of this, I must then
Mull it over and cross myself.
This noble king whose tale I am telling,
Every time he gets into a ship
And sets out on the high seas,
He must without fail fall
So very grievously ill,
In such a dangerous way
That while at sea he will not sleep,
Will not drink, will not eat
Until he might come to land again.
There he can find a cure for his ill.
And if perchance the king exerts himself
So strongly that he either drinks or eats there,
He throws it up, for he can keep nothing down.
And so the man had to live in this way
As long as he was at sea.
He lay there inside his bed curtains
Just like a man who is dead,
Who drinks or eats nothing, does not sleep.
Yet the minute he comes ashore
He becomes strong, hale, and hearty,
And he arms himself and feels so improved
That no illness at all remains in him.
Is this not the sign of great courage
And quite perfect valor
That he fears not this mortal peril?

quil na si petit en sa route
qui jamais en la mer entrast
puis que si forment li grevast
mais il le fait tout a lonnour
de jhesu crit no creatour
ou il a parfaite fiance
son cuer et toute sesperence
que de peril le gettera
et quen tous cas li aidera
pour ce quil est en son servise
et quil laimme et le doubte et prise
si ne doubte mort ne prison
glaive · saiette ne poison

Or sen va le roy et sa gent
nuit et jour par la mer nagent
nonques narresta li rois nobles
tant quil vint en lille de rodes
quant il y vint il sarresta
lui et sa gent bien apresta
et longuement si reposa
car grant mestier de repos a
la demoura .ii. mois entiers
et on le vit moult volentiers
li maistres par especial
et les freres de lospital
et aussi tous ceus dou pais
de qui il nestoit pas hais
grant honneur et grant reverence
li feirent de leur puissance
li roys ordena ses messages
preudommes · diligens · et sages
ou raison et bonne foy a
et en chipre les envoia
au partir leur dist doucement
et moult tres amiablement
vous irez en chypre · ordenez
que nous aiens plante de nez
des milleurs et des plus seures
et samenez des armeures
quan que vous en porrez avoir
et nespargniez pas nostre avoir
car quant sires qui vuet honneur
et qui het toute deshonneur
vuet faire ordener une chose
se son serviteur si oppose
qui plaint et pleure ce quil donne
sonneur estaint et abandonne
si que ce sont larmes perdues

For the lowest private soldier in his army
Who ever went to sea,
Was not as badly affected by it as was he.
But the king did everything for the honor
Of Jesus Christ, our Creator,
In Whom he had a perfect faith
And Who has his heart, and all his hope
That He would rescue him from peril
And offer him aid at every turn
Because he was in His service
And loved, respected, and esteemed Him.
And so he feared neither death nor capture,
Not the sword, the arrow or poison.

Now the king and his company make their way,
Sailing by night and day across the sea,
Nor did the noble king stop at all
Until he arrived at the island of Rhodes.
When he came there, he called a halt,
Prepared himself and his men well
And rested a long time.
For he was in great need of repose.
He remained two months altogether,
And he was quite welcomed there.
The grand master particularly
And the brother knights of the Hospital,
As well as all the natives of the place,
By whom he was hardly hated
—One and all paid him great honor
And reverence, to the best of their ability.
The king prepared his messengers,
Worthy knights both diligent and wise,
Who possessed reason and great loyalty;
And these he sent to Cyprus.
At their departure, he spoke to them softly
And with very great affection:
"You are to go to Cyprus; make sure
That we have plenty of ships,
The best and most dependable kind.
And bring back arms,
As many as you are able to obtain.
And don't be sparing with our treasure.
For when a lord who is eager for honor
And detests every kind of shame
Intends to undertake an enterprise,
If his liegeman opposes him in this,
And cries and moans about what he must give,
He abandons and destroys his honor;
And thus wasted are his tears,

denvie nees et venues
faites nous tres grant pourveances
descus · de pavaus et de lances
et de toute autre artillerie cccxxR
quil couvient a nostre maisnie
pour assaillir et pour deffendre
pour murs brisier et citez prendre
amenez selles et estriers
roncins · courciers · et bons destriers
pain vin et plante de vitaille
et gardez que becuit ne faille
et ouvriers de toutes manieres
fers · clos · panonciaus et banieres
et toute chose neccessaire
pour faire le chemin dou quaire
ou dailleurs ou dieux nous menra
qui le chemin nous apenra
amenez nous or et argent
et toutes maniere de gent
qui porront les armes porter
pour nous aidier et conforter
et les ordenez par grans routes
et dites a tous et a toutes
quen chypre jamais nenterons
ne la royne ne verrons
jusques atant quaiens este
soit en yver soit en este
en pais de nos annemis
car voue lavons et promis
li message bien lentendirent
et tantost de li se partirent
et firent son commandement
si bien si bel · si sagement
que nuls amender ni peust
tant estudier y sceust

Quant en chypre furent venu
tantost li gros et li menu
furent mande par le royaume
il ni ot gautier ne guillaume
en toute la mer denviron
sil sot nagier dun aviron
quil ne mandassent pour eaus dire
quil apareillent leur navire
car le roy einsi le commande
et avec ce il leur prie et mande
qua ceste fois si bien le servent
que sa bonne grace desservent
car il vuet passer en egypte

Which are caused and occasioned by envy.
Make sure we are well provided
With shields, breastplates, lances,
And artillery of all types,
Whatever is appropriate for our forces
Both in the attack and on defense,
To break down walls and take cities.
Bring with you saddles and stirrups,
Pack horses, coursers, and good fighting steeds;
Bread, wine, and plenty of meat,
And make sure that the hardtack doesn't give out,
And that there are workers of every kind,
Iron, nails, escutcheons, and banners,
As well as every other thing needed
To make the journey to Cairo,
Or elsewhere, wherever God may lead us,
Who will show us the way.
Bring back gold and silver,
And men of all ranks
Who can bear arms
In order to aid and comfort us.
And form them into large companies,
And tell all the people, men and women alike,
That we will not return to Cyprus
Nor look upon the queen
Until we have spent time,
Either in winter or summer,
Within the homeland of our enemies.
For this we have vowed and promised."
The messengers understood well
And at once departed from him
To carry out his commands
So well, so ably, so wisely
That no one could do better,
However ably he could make the attempt.

When they arrived in Cyprus,
At once both high and low
Were summoned throughout the kingdom.
There was no Walter or William
In all the seacoast regions
Who, if able to row an oar,
Was not called upon so he could tell them
They should equip their fleet.
For such was the command of the king,
Who also entreated and ordered
That they should serve him at this time
Well enough to merit his good graces
Because he intended crossing to Egypt,

qui nest mie chose petite
lors dun commun assentement
respondirent moult liement
quil le feroient · et le firent
mieus encor quil ne leur deirent
et cestoit le plus fort dassez
coment tels pueples fust passez
et les pourveances aussi
quon ne fait mie sans soussi
et sans avoir mainte pensee
pour gouverner si grant armee

Apres ce aus nobles parlerent
et sagement leur exposerent
doucement et de bel arroy
toute lentencion dou roy
lors par une vois respondirent
tantost que plus ni atendirent
que volentiers le serviroient
et son commandement feroient
pour mettre le corps et la vie
et qui avoient grant envie
daler contre les mescreans
qui pas ne sont en dieu creans
et li pueples qui la estoit
qui tous drois sus ses piez estoit
respondi a .x. mille vois
alons alons · gi vois · gi vois
li messagier les mercierent
tres humblement et senclinerent
vers eaus · et puis se departirent
na ceste fois plus ne feirent
et quant a lautre pourveance
firent il tele diligence
quen brief temps furent assevi
a tous poins · et se vous plevi
quil recouvrerent a plante ·
de vivres · et a volente
armes · chevaus · artillerie
pour mettre dedens leur navie
ars turquois · engiens et bricoles
chaz · pannons bannieres frandoles
et quan quil faut pour assaillir
et pour deffendre · et sans faillir cccxxV
il trouverent si grant finance
et tant davoir que sans doubtance
je ne le saroie nombrer
pour ce ne men vueil encombrer
de gent de piet et de cheval

And this is no petty undertaking.
Then with a unanimous will
They answered quite happily
That they would do so, and they did it
Even more ably than they had been instructed.
And by far the most difficult thing was
How such an army might be transported
And their provisions as well,
Which could hardly be accomplished
Without care and much planning
So that a force this size might be kept in order.

Afterward they spoke to the nobility
And wisely explained to them
Politely and in an appealing way,
The king's entire plan.
Then, with one voice, they answered
Immediately, waited no longer,
That they would serve the king willingly
And do as he commanded,
With both their bodies and lives,
And they were very eager
To take arms against the infidels
Who do not believe in God.
And the people there present,
Who were all standing on their feet,
Answered with ten thousand voices:
"Let's go, let's go; I'll go, I'll go."
The messengers thanked them
Very humbly and bowed
In their direction, and afterward departed.
Nor did they do more at this time.
And in regard to other provisions,
They accomplished it so diligently
That in a short while all was
Done; and I pledge you
That they amassed a great amount
Of food, as much as they wished,
Arms, horses, artillery,
All to be stored in their ships;
Turkish bows, catapults, mangonels,
Fighting platforms, pennants, banners, slings,
And whatever else was required for assault
And for defense; and without fail
They came into the possession
Of such a great amount of money and treasure
I doubtless could put no figure on it.
And so I won't take that on.
Of infantry and cavalry

furent plein li mont et li val
quant il firent leur moustre faire
car si com jay oy retraire
si grant plante en y avoit
que homme nombrer ne le savoit
la avoit trompes et naquaires
et dinstrumens plus de .c. paires
qui faisoient si tres grant bruit
que liaue en retentist et bruit
et la marine aussi resonne
de leur son qui doucement sonne

Puis firent leurs vivres chargier
dedens leurs nez sans atargier
armes · chevaus · et toutes choses
neccessaires que penser oses
pour si grant fait comme de prendre
la noble cite dalixandre
tant ont pene et travillie
quil ont chargie et abillie
et mis a point tout leur harnois
le soudant ne prisent .ii. nois
ne tout le remenant dou monde
lors sesquipent en mer parfonde
et tant nagierent et voguerent
quen rodes briefment arriverent
quant li bons roys sceut leur venue
il ne demoura pas en mue
en sa chambre · eins couri au port
a grant joie et a grant deport
moult doucement les festia
et leur promist et ottria
guerredon · merite · et salaire
si grant que bien leur devra plaire
comme cils qui vuet desservir
ce queinsi le viennent servir
la ot maint pelerin estrange
digne · donneur et de loange
qui moult tres grant joie feirent
quant au rivage les veirent
li grans maistres de lospital
descendi dou chastel aval
a moult tres noble compaingnie
de chevaliers et de maisnie
pour eaus veoir et conjouir
et pour les nouveles oir
briefment des vaissiaus descendirent
liement · et terre preirent
mais bonnes gardes y laissierent

The mountains and the valleys were full
As soon as they sent out the muster.
Indeed I have heard tell
The army was larger
Than any man could count.
There were trumpets and drums,
And more than a hundred pairs of other instruments,
And the place echoed with such a mighty noise
That the water itself resounded and was stirred.
And the sea too rang out
With their sound, which was sweet to hear.

Then without delay they had
Their provisions loaded in the ships,
Armaments, horses, and all the necessities
That you could even dare imagine
For such a grand plan as the taking
Of the noble city of Alexandria.
They labored and worked
Until they had stowed away, ordered,
And readied all their equipment.
They cared not two figs for the Sultan,
Nor for the rest of the world either.
Then they set out on the high seas,
Sailed and rowed until they arrived
At Rhodes shortly thereafter.
When the good king learned of their arrival,
He did not stay indecisive
Within his rooms, but hastened to the port
With great joy and great excitement.
He greeted them with much affection,
Promised and then bestowed
Rewards, recompense, and bonuses,
So large they should be well pleased,
Like a man who is eager to merit
The fact that they had come to serve him.
Present was many a foreign pilgrim
Worthy of praise and honor,
Who celebrated so very heartily
When they saw them on the shore.
The grand master of the Hospital
Came down from his castle
With a very fine retinue
Of knights and courtiers
In order to look upon and greet them,
And also to hear the news.
In short, they disembarked from the ships
Joyfully and came to land.
But they left able guards on board

qui jour et nuit y demourerent
quen si grant fait faut bonne garde
qui ne soit lente ni couarde
en chastel de rodes monterent
et par la ville se logierent
bien et bel et se rafreschirent
et leurs chevaus en bon point mirent
pour partir quant le roy vorra
mais sil puet avec lui menra
les chevaliers et lamiraut
de rodes · qui moult scet et vaut
et qui est de grant emprise
dont chascuns laimme et loe · et prise

Or vous vueil les vaissiaus nommer
qui flotoient par mi la mer
il avoient coques et barges
panfiles · naves · grans et larges
griparies et tafourees
lins · et fyacres · et galees
targes a chevaus · et huissiers
et si avoit de bons courciers
plus tost courans que nuls chevaus
pour courir les mons et les vaus
si comme londe se demeinne
de la mer · quant li vens lameinne
et la tourble et fait tempester
si quon ne la puet arrester

Mais ne vueil pas mettre en oubli
que li noble et li anobli
de chypre · et toutes gens darmes cccxxiR
qui aimment dieu · honneur et dames
estoient a ceste assamblee
qui ne fu secrette ne emblee
car tous li mondes la savoit
mais des signeurs nuls ni avoit
que li bons roys ala requerre
par toute crestienne terre
pour avoir confort et aye
dargent · de gent · ou de navie
et de y venir sil leur plaisoit
quonneur ce faire leur faisoit
leur response avez bien veu
se ci devant avez leu
il li orent moult en couvent
mais vraiement ce fu tout vent
car bien say quil ni furent pas
nonques il nen passerent pas

Who were to remain day and night
Since such noble expeditions require a secure watch,
One neither cowardly nor lax.
They went up to the castle at Rhodes;
Throughout the town they found lodgings
Pleasant and proper and refreshed themselves
And put their horses in good shape
For departure, whenever the king decided.
For, if he can, he will take with him
Both the knights and the admiral
Of Rhodes, a valuable man who knew much,
And who was extremely accomplished,
And thus praised, lauded, and esteemed by all.

Now I intend to catalog for you the ships
That were floating on the water.
There were transport ships and barges,
Small war ships, boats large and wide,
Brigantines and horse transports,
Light frigates and ships of the line and galleys,
Boats for carrying horses, and porters;
And there were also good corsairs
Able to travel faster than any steed,
To skim over the hills and valleys,
Whatever shape the waves might take
In the sea when the wind drives it,
Troubles it, and causes storms
So that nothing can stop it.

But I wish not to forget
That the nobles and those raised to that rank
From Cyprus, as well as all men at arms
Who love God, honor, and ladies
Were present at this gathering,
Which was neither secret nor hidden
Since everyone knew of it.
And yet in attendance were none of the great lords
Whom the good king had gone to enlist
Throughout all of Christendom
In order to get comfort and aid
In the form of money, men, and ships,
And to come along, should they please
That honor so directed them.
You have seen well what their answer was
If have read it here above.
They had made many promises to him,
But, in truth, they were nothing but wind.
For I know well these men were not present
And never did make the passage.

et vesci la cause sans faille
il aimment mieus pais que bataille
et cest grant peinne destre preus
a gens qui sont lent et prisceus
mais ce nest peinne ne labour
a gens qui desirent honnour
einsois leur est pais et repos
or revenray a mon propos
toutes gens de piet demourerent
eu chypre · et la pais garderent
car honte est de perdre sa terre
pour aler une autre conquerre
et se fait cils biaus vasselage
qui bien deffent son heritage

En rodes ot .i. amiral
qui les freres de lospital
qui sont bon chevalier de pris
et les gens darmes dou pourpris
et dou pais fist mettre ensamble
li roy leur pria ce me samble
que o li fussent en ceste armee
qui estoit faite et ordenee
en lonneur de nostre signeur
tantost li grant et li meneur
respondirent que il iroient
volentiers · et que prest estoient
pour aler ou le roy vorra
et que ja piet nen demoura
li roys les mercia forment
puis fist crier isnellement
que le landemain partiroit
mais ne dist pas quel part iroit
pour ce que se li anemy
heussent la aucun amy
il lor peust faire savoir
larmee · pour lui decevoir
et pour ce celoit il sa voie
or prions dieu quil le convoie
quonques mais si grant entreprise
de tant de gens ne fu emprise
qui lors veist gens esveillier
troter · courir · et abillier
coques · nes · avirons et voiles
et requeudre les tros des toiles
cordes renouer · et trecier
et les grans maz es nes drecier
et qui veist les amiraus
ordener armes et chevaus

And here is the reason, without doubt:
They preferred peace to war,
And it's very hard for men to be brave
When they are slackers and hypocrites.
But such a thing is no trial or trouble
For men who desire honor.
Instead to them this is peace and repose.
Now I will return to my theme.
All the foot soldiers remained
In Cyprus and protected the kingdom
Since it's shameful to lose your land
When you go and capture another.
And a man acts as a knight should
When he ably defends his own realm.

In Rhodes there was an admiral
Who had assembled the brothers
From the Hospital, knights
Of excellent renown, and the men at arms
From the expedition and from the country.
The king asked them, I believe,
To become part of the army
That had been put together and convoked
In the honor of Our Lord.
At once both the high and the low
Answered that they would willingly
Make the passage and were ready
To set out whenever the king might wish
—Not one foot would they lag behind.
The king thanked them heartily,
Then had it quickly announced
Their departure would be the next day,
Yet he did not say where they would go
Because if it was that the enemy
Had any friends in the place,
They could alert their army
In order to lay a trap for him.
And so he kept secret his path.
Now let us pray God brings him to safety!
For never before had this grand an enterprise
Been undertaken by so large a force.
Whoever witnessed the soldiers awake,
Rush around, hasten, and ready
The transports, ships, oars, and sails,
Put the canvas in proper trim,
Fasten and pull on the ropes,
Position the great masts in the ships;
Whoever witnessed the admirals
Put both armaments and horses in order

cestoit bele chose a veoir
da si grant fait bien pourveoir
briefment si furent mis a point
que de deffaute ni ot point
eins pooient au point dou jour
partir · sans plus faire sejour

Li roys se coucha en son lit
a grant joie et a grant delit
et faisoit a chascun la feste
de son armee qui est preste
.i. sien chambrelain appella
qui tost oy son appel a
ce fu percevauls de coulongne
uns chevaliers qui bien besongne
car il est sages et hardis cccxxiV
preus · vaillans · en fais · et en dis
li roys li dist en tel maniere
parceval · jay fiance entiere
en toy · plus quen homme dou monde
passer me faut la mer parfonde
et si ne say ou je doy traire
maintes fois as estet au quaire
en alixandre · et en surie
et en egypte · se te prie
que tu me vueilles consillier
ou nous porrons mieux esploitier
car tous desesperez seroie
sen vain la haute mer passoie
et tous li mondes le saroit
si que chascuns se moqueroit
de mon armee et de mon fait
que jay a si grant peinne fait

Percevaus le roy entendi
et sagement li respondi
sire je sui vo creature
et si vous aim damour si pure
que je ne vous conseilleroie
que bien · mieus morir ameroie
comment que ne soie pas dignes
de savoir vos secrez couvines
si que je vous conseilleray
a mon pooir · et voir diray
sire jay este vraiement
en alixandre longuement
prisonniers · mais je mesbatoie
par mi la ville ou je voloie
si vous diray la verite

—It was quite a sight to see
The preparations for so great a mission.
In short, everything was made ready,
While not a thing was left undone;
Instead they would be able to depart
At daybreak and remain there no longer.

The king lay down on his bed,
Full of joy and great delight;
And he indicated to one and all
His satisfaction with the army, which was ready.
He called over one of his chamberlains,
Who heard his summons at once.
The man was Perceval of Coulonges,
A knight who does his duty well,
For he is brave and wise,
Worthy and valiant in word and deed.
The king spoke to him in this way:
"Perceval, I have complete faith
In you, more than in any other man in the world.
I must cross over the high seas,
Yet do not yet know where I should head.
You have been in Cairo many times,
In Alexandria and in Syria,
Also in Egypt. So I ask you
To please counsel me
About where we could best succeed,
For I would be completely ashamed
To cross the ocean deep in vain.
And all the world would find out
So that every man would afterward mock
My army and my deeds,
Which I accomplished with such great pain."

Perceval listened to the king
And wisely answered him:
"Sire, I am your man
And so love you with an affection so pure
That I would only counsel
What would benefit you. I'd rather die otherwise.
Although I am not worthy enough
To be taken into your strictest confidence,
Even so I'll offer the best advice
I can and speak the truth.
Sire, it's true enough I was
For a long time prisoner
At Alexandria; but I was able to disport
Myself through the town as I liked
And so will give you an accurate account

dou pais et de la cite
sire alixandre est une ville
qui tient de tour plus de .x. mille
car elle est grant et plate · et lee
de tours · et de haus murs fermee
et si a a chascune porte
bonnes tours · dont elle est plus forte
environnee est de fossez
grans larges · et parfons assez
cest une ville si pueplee
quon y voit a une assamblee
cent mille hommes en une place
biaus et gens de corps et de face
mais tant sont de foible marrien
quen armes il ne valent rien
eins sen fuient comme chevriaus
puis quil ha gens darmes entreaus
il sont de trop povre couvine
et si siet droit seur la marine
un petit plus dune huchie
or est raisons que je vous die
une chose moult mervilleuse
et qui est pour eaus perilleuse
ce sont gens qui vivent par sort
et pres de la ville a .i. port
que chascuns le viez port appelle
sus une place pleinne et belle
qui entre le port et la ville
est pleinne de greve et darsille
il tiennent veritablement
tous et toutes communement
que cest droite neccessite
que par ce viez port la cite
dalixandre sera gastee
destruite · prise · arse · et brulee
et desconfite · et si vous di
que ciert en jour de venredi
si que sire je vous conseil
que vous usez de mon conseil
et que faciez vos voiles tendre
droit vers la cite dalixandre
car diex si noble destinee
vous a ce mest vis destinee
quen verite vous la penrez
sans faillir · quant vous y venrez
et en pais qui est entour
il ni a fortresse ne tour
deffense ne ville fermee cccxxiiR
pour tenir contre vostre armee

Of the city and the lands surrounding.
Sire, Alexandria is a city
More than ten thousand measures around,
For it is broad, flat, and wide,
Protected by high walls and towers too.
And these strong towers at every gate
Make it even more secure.
The town is surrounded by a moat
That is long, wide, and rather deep.
The city is so crowded with people
That a hundred thousand at a time
Are seen assembled together,
Handsome of body and face,
But with such weak constitutions
That they are worth nothing as soldiers
And would flee like goats.
Although they have men at arms among them,
These are of quite poor quality.
And it sits rather close to the seashore,
A little more than a man's voice can carry.
It is fitting now I relate to you
Something quite marvelous
That is to their peril.
These are people who live in accord with divination.
And close to the city is a port
That everyone calls the Old Port,
Above an area that's open and beautiful.
Between the port and the town
Where the ground is full of shingle and mud.
The people, men and women alike
In common, think truly
That true necessity dictates
The city of Alexandria will be laid waste
Through the Old Port,
Destroyed, captured, burned, set afire,
And brought down; and I tell you
That this is supposed to happen on a Friday.
Thus, sire, I advise you
To follow my counsel
And set your sails
Straight toward the city of Alexandria
Because God in my view has destined
You for a quite noble fate:
For truly you will capture the place
Without fail when you come there.
Also in the countryside all around
There is no towered fortress,
No defensive wall, no fortified city
That could hold out against your army.

je ne vous en say plus que dire
ei li roys commensa a rire
qui moult volentiers lescouta
et sus son cheves sacouta
et li dist cest fort chose a faire
que ville de si grant affaire
et fermee si richement
soit prise si legierement
mesmement de gent si petite
comment quil soit tuit deslite
mais ce nest mie forte chose
a dieu · qui tout fait et dispose
que mil desconfissent cent mille
et de penre une telle ville
ne homme ne sen doit donner gloire
fors a dieu qui fait la victoire
il en a lonneur et le pris
com cils ou tous biens sont compris
si que perceval je macort
et sui dou tout a vostre acort
si quen lonneur de dieu le pere
et de sa glorieuse mere
et de la court de paradis
ou jaray fiance toudis
nous penrons demain nostre voie
vers alixandre · et toute voie
nous ferons samblance de traire
en chipre · qui est le contraire
par quoy des anemis sceue
ne puist estre vostre venue
atant la parole laissierent
si dormirent et reposerent

Au matinet quil ajourna
li roy bien et bel satourna
et trestuit li autre ensement
messe oirent devotement
et puis en leurs vaissiaus monterent
et en haute mer sesquiperent
en .i. lundi bien men remembre
droit .xxviii. jours en septembre
lan mil .ccc. .v. et sexante
li roys metoit toute sentente
a tel fin que sa gent cuidassent
que droit vers chypre retournassent
mais il pensoit tout le contraire
si comme vous lorrez retraire
tant nagierent de place en place
quil vinrent tuit par la dieu grace

I don't know what more to tell you."
And the king, who had been
His willing listener, began to laugh;
And he leaned on his bedpost
And said to him: "It's a difficult feat to accomplish,
That a city of such great size
And this well fortified
Might be taken with such ease,
Especially by a host this small,
Even though they are all hand-picked.
Yet it is hardly a difficult thing
For God, Who creates and disposes all things,
To have a thousand undo a hundred thousand
And to take a city such as this one.
Nor should any man award the glory for it
To anyone save God, Who brings victory.
His is the honor and the praise,
For He's the source of all that is good.
And so, Perceval, I agree,
And find myself completely in accord with you;
Thus to the honor of God the father,
And of His glorious mother,
And of His court in paradise,
In which my faith is constant,
We will make our way tomorrow
Toward Alexandria; and yet even so,
We will let everyone think our destination
Is Cyprus, which lies in the opposite direction.
In this way our enemies cannot
Be informed of our coming."
With this they left off talking,
Took their rest, and slept.

In the morning when day broke,
The king prepared himself properly and well,
And all the others did likewise.
They heard Mass devoutly
And embarked afterwards into their ships
And set out on the high seas
On a Monday, well I remember it,
Right on the twenty-eighth day of September,
In the year thirteen hundred and sixty-five.
The king gave all his attention
To the end that his host might believe
That they were returning straight to Cyprus.
But he was intending just the opposite,
As you are about to hear related.
They sailed on, from one point to the next,
Until they arrived, one and all, by God's grace

en .i. lieu qui est appellez
crambouse · la sont ostelez
au matinet messe escouta
li roys · que uns prestres li chanta
et quant la messe fu chantee
il monta dedens sa galee
et fu le diemenche ensievant
il sen va par la mer bruiant
et tuit li autre le sievirent
qui venir a bon port desirent

Quant li roys fu bien eslongiez
il ne sest gueres atargiez
eins fist sonner une trompette
qui haut et cler sonne et trompette
lors sarresta tout le navire
pour oir ce quon vorra dire
li rois commanda quon leur die
que chascuns le sieve a navie
tout droit le chemin dalixandre
car la vuet il aler descendre
se dieux plaist · nil narrestera
jusques atant quil y sera
qui lors veist gens esbahir
et murmurer par grant air
il y avoit si grant murmure
que chascuns deaus dit et murmure
alixandre est si fort cite
et si poissant · quen verite
tous li mondes ne la penroit
li amiraus en geteroit
.v.^{c} mille homes en une heure cccxxiiV
nostres roy pour neant labeure
et si nest pas bien consilliez
einsois sest en vein travilliez
nil na pas gent pour lui combatre
car il seront cent contre quatre
nompourquant prenons laventure
qui moult est perilleuse et dure
et prions dieu quil nous conforte
et qua port de joie nous porte
car se la nous couvient morir
il le nous sara bien merir

Einsi chascuns se conforta
et li bons roy les enorta
que chascuns ait bonne esperence
en dieu · et toute sa fiance
car sil lont ades en memoire

At a place that is named
Crambousa. There they found lodgings.
In the morning, the king heard
Mass, sung for him by a priest,
And as soon as the mass had been sung,
He embarked on his galley.
And this was the following Sunday.
He sailed on through the rough water
While all the others followed,
Who were eager to come to a good port.

When the king had gone some distance,
He did not wait at all,
But had someone blow a trumpet,
Which rang out, sounding loud and clear.
With this all the fleet halted
To hear said what was intended to be said.
The king ordered for all to be told
That they should follow him in their ships
On a course straight to Alexandria
Because that is where he intended to land
If it pleased God; nor would he halt
Until the moment he was there.
And he saw the soldiers, who were surprised
And murmuring in a very excited fashion;
There was so much murmuring
Because each man said and whispered:
"Alexandria is so strong a city
And so mighty that in truth
Even the entire world couldn't take it.
The admiral will send out
Five hundred thousand men in an hour.
Our king labors for nothing
And has not been well advised;
Rather he has taken pains for nothing.
The army is not large enough to oppose the man,
For it will be a hundred against four.
Yet let's take up the adventure,
Which is quite dangerous and difficult,
And let us pray that God will help us
And carry us to the gate of joy,
For if we must die in such a place
He will know well how to reward us."

In this way every man took comfort,
And the good king exhorted them
One and all to have a firm hope
In God, and all their trust.
For if He would remember them in good time,

il aront honneur et victoire
il dist signeurs naiez doubtance
de la plante de la puissance
des anemis dieu · ne freour
qui vivent en si grant errour
en tel pechie en tel misere
quil ne congnoissent dieu le pere
ses commandemens ne sa loy
pour ce vous di en bonne foy
que dieus tous les desconfira
et de leurs mains vous gardera
sil sont plus et nous somes mains
diex les metera en nos mains
une cantique determine
que jadis par vertu divine
uns homs en desconfissoit mille
et .ii. enchassoient .x. mille
dieus le faisoit certeinnement
questre ne peust autrement
et cest a li chose legiere
de les destruire en tel maniere
si que tous les desconfirez
vous le verrez et le direz

Quant il ot dit sa volente
il furent tuit entalente
telement que le plus couart
cuidoit bien valoir renouart
si crierent a haute alainne
quant paris ala querre helainne
il ne fist pas si grant emprise
nobles roy com tu las emprise
si que de cuer te servirons
et avec toy par tout irons
ne te lairons na mort na vie
pour riens quaveingne ne quon die
mais il feirent le contraire
si comme apres lorrez retraire
va devant nous irons apres
sans riens ressongnier long ne pres
li jours fu biaus la mer fu quoie
chascuns a bien nagier semploie
car li vens estoit couvenables
bons et dous · cois · profitables
si ont tant nagie et vogue
par mi la mer qui a po gue
quau viez port devant alixandre
vint li bons roys sans plus atendre
en un juedi ce mest avis

Theirs would be the honor and victory.
He said: "Lords, have no fear at all
Of the multitudes and the power
Of God's enemies, and no worry either,
For they live in so great error,
In such sinfulness, in such misery
Since they do not know God the Father,
His commandments, or His law.
And so in good faith I tell you
That God will bring disaster upon them all
And protect you from their hands;
Though they are many and we are fewer,
God will deliver them into our grasp.
A canticle offers certain proof
That in olden times through divine power
One man undid a thousand
And two punished ten thousand.
Surely God did this thing
Since it could not have happened otherwise,
And indeed He will find destroying them
In such fashion easy enough.
So you will wipe out them all;
This you will see and speak of."

When he had said all he wished,
They were, everyone, so eager
That even the most cowardly
Believed he was as worthy as Renouart.
And they shouted out loudly:
"When Paris went to seek out Helen,
He undertook a mission less grand,
Noble king, than the one you've taken on.
And so from the heart we will serve you
And venture everywhere with you.
We will not abandon you either alive or dead
For anything that might happen or be said
(And yet they did the opposite,
As you will afterward hear recounted)
Go in front and we will follow you,
Fearing nothing near or far."
The day was bright, the sea was calm,
And every man bent to the task of sailing;
For the wind was favoring,
Good and soft, untroubled and advantageous.
And they set sail and plowed through the waves
Across the sea that has few fords
Until the good king, not delaying at all,
Arrived before the Old Port in front of Alexandria
On a Thursday, it seems to me,

jour de la feste s. denis
et y vint a leure de nonne
li roy ses besongnes ordonne
en atendant sa compaingnie
dont il vint la plus grant partie
einsois que la nuit fust venue
or le gart cils qui fist la nue
queinsois queussent but ne mengie
furent li anemy logie
devant le vies port a tel route
quil couvroient la terre toute
bien estoient plus de .c. mille
et en yssoit hors de la ville
tant · et si mervilleusement
que nuls homs nombrer bonnement
ne les peust en verite cccxxiiiR
tant en y ot grant quantite
qui empeschierent le descendre
de ses vaissiaus · et terre prendre
einsois que laube fust crevee
fu venue toute larmee
la nuit passa et li jours vint
si biaus · que plus bel ne couvint
si quil veoient vis a vis
la plante de leurs annemis
quant li bons roys cuida descendre
li sarrasin sans plus attendre
entrerent jusques au nombril
dedens la mer plus de .xx. mil
car la mer estoit la si plate
si pleinne · si coie · et si mate
que pour ce estoient demourees
long dou port toutes les galees
aussi comme a get dune pierre
que ne pooient penre terre
li sarrazin tant sefforcerent
que les galees aprocherent
tant y ont trait et tant lancie
que pluseurs des nos ont blecie
qui bien et bel se deffendoient
des galees ou il estoient
et pour ytant que leur navie
estoit estroitement rengie
pres de la rive de la mer
lun ne pooit tant lautre amer
quil descendissent .ii. et .ii.
et aveques ce chascuns deuls
estoit en mer jusquau braier
pour les sarrasins deplaier

The feast day of St. Denis.
And they came at the ninth hour.
The king put his plans in order
While waiting for his army,
The greater part of which arrived
Before night did fall.
Now may He who made the clouds protect him!
For even before they ate or drank,
The enemy were encamped
In front of the Old Port in such numbers
They covered every inch of ground.
There were well more than a hundred thousand.
And they sallied forth from the city
So marvelously and were such a multitude
That no man at all could properly
Count how many they were in truth;
There were such hordes of these people
That they prevented embarkation from his vessels
And making way to land.
Before the new day did dawn,
All his host had come.
The night passed, and such a beautiful day
Dawned—none finer could have.
And so the Christians could look face to face
On the multitude of their foes.
When the good king made to disembark,
The Saracens, not hesitating at all,
Waded out into the water up to the navel,
More than twenty thousand of them.
For the sea was there so calm,
So full, quiet, and untroubled,
That for this reason all the galleys
Were moored some distance from the port,
As far as a stone could be hurled,
So they could not come to land.
The Saracens pressed so far forward
That they neared the galleys.
They shot so many arrows and threw so many lances
They wounded a number of our men,
Who defended themselves well and ably
From the galleys where they stood.
And in as much as their ships
Were tightly drawn up in rows
Close to the margins of the shore,
One man could not close up to his fellow
So that they could jump down two by two.
And in addition to this, each of the men
Went in the water up to his breastplate
In order to get at the Saracens.

en ce point faut quon se combatre
pour la mer qui est la trop plate
et einsi com chascuns descent
.x. se combatent contre cent
mais onques mais si druement
ne vit homs gresler vraiement
com lances · saiettes · et dars
volent en lair de toutes pars
pour nos crestiens damagier
mais bien se savoient targier
car autrement il fussent mort
et occis de piteuse mort
et aussi moult forment traioient
les nostres quen vaissiaus estoient

La fu li contes de genoive
que pour colee quil recoive
pour grevance ne pour labour
pour froidure ne pour chalour
de lestour ne se partira
ne le bon roy ne guerpira
il ne fu pas des darreniers
einsois descendi li premiers
juenes homs estoit · lons · et drois
biaus · gracieus en tous endrois
de bien ferir pas ne se faint
il abat tout ce quil ataint
enclos estoit de toutes pars
si se deffent comme uns liepars
quant on li vuet tollir sa proie
mais la force ne fu pas soie
car tout ensamble et a une heure
plus de .c. li coururent seure
si que si jour estoient cours
se briefment neust heu secours
li roy avoit .ii. mareschaus
li uns estoit ses amiraus
lautre fu symon thinoli
qui estoit descendus o li
et tuit li autre ensement
descendirent isnellement
cils .ii. furent si vaillant homme
que dalixandre jusqua romme
navoit .ii. hommes si parfais
en vaillance en dis et en fais
tuit se fierent en la meslee
la ot mainte teste copee
et maint sarrazin detranchie
brief · il ont le conte laissie

cccxxiiiV

Because the sea there was very calm,
The battle had to proceed in this fashion.
And just as every man disembarked,
Ten would be fighting against a hundred.
Indeed never has any man
In truth seen hail as thick
As the lances, arrows, and darts
That flew through the air from all sides
In order to harm our Christians.
Yet they knew well how to bide their time
Because otherwise they would have been killed
And died a miserable death.
And also all the while our men who were
In the ships kept shooting fiercely.

There was the count of Geneva,
Who for no blow he received,
For no hindrance or difficulty,
For no cold or heat
Would ever retreat from the fight
Nor betray the good king.
He stood not among the last ranks,
But disembarked the first.
A young man he was, tall and straight,
Handsome, gracious in every way.
He was not reticent to strike a hard blow,
But felled every man he reached.
He was pressed in on all sides;
So he defended himself like a leopard
When someone thinks to steal its prey.
But it was not his strength alone
Because all together and at the same moment
More than a hundred set upon him.
Thus his days would have been shortened
Had he not received assistance at once.
The king had two marshals,
One was his admiral,
And the other was Simon de Thinoly,
Who both debarked with him.
And all the others in turn
Got quickly down.
These two were such valiant men
That from Alexandria to Rome
Were not two men this perfect
In valor, in word, and in deed.
All delivered blows in the melee.
There many a head was severed
And many a Saracen disemboweled.
Indeed they left the count

sain et legier preu et hardi
na ceste heure rien ne perdi
li bons princes de galylee
yssi apres de sa galee
devant tous si hardiement
et si tres perilleusement
quon le tint a grant hardiesse
et a mervilleuse prouesse
chascuns li donne los et pris
pour le grant fait quil a empris
mervilleusement se combat
il en tue tant et abat
quil fist place a plus de sexante
qui descendirent sans atente
nies fu dou roy et ses privez
sages vaillans · et esprouvez

Et li vicontes de tourenne
descendi apres · qui grant peinne
met a bien faire la besongne
chascuns le fuit et le ressongne
car porte leur a grant damage
la journee sus le rivage

Li roys yssi de sa galee
lespee en poing la teste armee
et entra dedens la bataille
la fiert et cope · et tue · et maille
quan quil ataint tue et mehaingne
nest riens qui a ses cops se teingne
.xxx. en occist en petit deure
si que la place li demeure
chascuns le fuit chascuns le doubte
briefment il passoit toute route
il avoit la un amiraut
qui estoit venus a lassaut
il dist au roy viens tu conquerre
nostre pais et nostre terre
je te moustreray ta folie
ton outrage et ta cornardie
lors donna le roy tel colee
dune fort lance bien ferree
quil le fist reculer .iii. pas
li roy li dist tu ne scez pas
encor comment mespee taille
mais briefment le saras sans faille
il passe avant si li rendi
tel cop que tout le pourfendi
et dit cuvert vous mentirez

Hale and hearty, brave and able-bodied;
There were no losses at this hour.
The good prince of Galilee
Then disembarked from his galley
In front of all, so courageously
And in such a daring fashion
That this was thought magnificent
Courage and marvelous prowess as well.
Every man praised and acclaimed him
For the great deed he had done.
In an extraordinary way he gave battle;
He killed and struck down so many
That he made room for more than sixty,
Who then disembarked without delay.
He was the nephew of the king and his intimate,
A man wise, valiant, and of proven worth.

And the viscount of Tourenne
Came down after him, who exerted himself
Mightily to accomplish the task.
Every man fled and feared him
Because he did them great damage
That day on the shore.

The king descended from his galley,
Sword in hand, helmet on his head,
And he joined in the fight.
There he cut and thrust and killed and slew,
Maiming or dispatching any man he reached.
There was no one who could stand under his blows.
He killed thirty of them in a short time
So that the place of battle remained his.
Every man fled him, every man feared him.
In short, he passed through the entire host.
There present was an admiral
Who had sallied forth to the fight.
He said to the king: "Have you come
To conquer our country and our lands?
I'll make your madness plain to you,
Your outrage and your stupidity."
Then he struck the king such a blow
With a strong lance of good iron
That he had to retreat three paces.
And the king said to him: "You don't
Know yet how my sword cuts,
But without fail soon you will."
He moved forward and dealt the admiral
Such a stroke he was split in two.
And the king said: "You lie, scoundrel.

na roy jamais ne metterez
la main · quil ne vous en souveingne
quant li autre de sa compaingne
virent ce cop il reculerent
pour le roy que trop fort doubterent

Or vueil conter une apertise
que chascuns loe moult et prise
de bremont et de perceval
qui sont preu vaillant et vassal
il estoient en leur galee
et bien veoient la meslee
mais ne pooient terre prendre
ne il ne pooient descendre
si quil saillirent en la barge
dou roy · qui estoit grant et large
com bon et loial chambellain
puis sans eschiele et sans poulain
saillirent dedens la marine
en la mer sont jusqua leschine
la se combatent fierement
et si tres orguilleusement
que tous ceuls qui les regardoient
a merveilles sen mervilloient
tant ont feru tant ont maillie
tant ont fait tant ont esploitie
que malgre sarrazins ambdoy
sont venu dencoste le roy
li roys les vit sen ot grant joie
et dist signeurs se dieus me voie
venus estes a la bonne heure
or leur couron vitement seure
si seront tantost desconfit cccxxiiiiR
chascuns son commandement fit
si bien et si hardiement
quon ne pooit plus vaillanment
la ne fu pas lons · li sermons
li roy · percevaulx · et bremons
se fierent dedens la bataille
chascuns tint lespee qui taille
chascuns grans cops donne et depart
des sarrazins font grant essart
mais li roys si fort se traveille
que chascuns en a grant merveille

Aussi perceval de coulongne
qui a basti ceste besongne
moult hardiement se combat
quan quil ataint tue et abat

You'll never put your hand on a king
And not have him remember it."
When the others of his troop
Witnessed the blow, they gave ground
Before the king, for they greatly feared him.

Now I intend relating an exploit
That was much admired and praised by all,
Of Brémont and Perceval,
Who are able, valiant, and proper knights.
They were in their galley
And had a good view of the melee,
But could not get to land,
Nor could they debark from their ship.
So they leapt into the king's
Barge, which was long and broad,
Like loyal and able chamberlains.
Then, without a ladder or leg armor,
They jumped into the sea.
Into the water up to their spines.
There they fought fiercely
And with such great pridefulness
That all those who looked upon them
Did marvel at the wonder of it.
They slashed so much, struck so much,
Did so much, accomplished so much
That, despite the Saracens, both
Reached the king's side.
The king saw them and felt great joy,
And he said: "Lords, so God guide me,
You've come at the right time.
Let's attack them fiercely now
So that they will soon be undone."
Each did as he commanded
So ably and with such bravery
That no one could have acted more valiantly.
The conversation there was a short one.
The king, Perceval, and Brémont
Dealt blows in the battle.
Each man wielded the sword that cuts;
Each delivered and struck great blows.
Against the Saracens they did struggle mightily.
But the king exerted himself so much
That every man was amazed at him.

And in addition Perceval of Coulonges,
Who had conceived their plan,
Fought with much courage as well;
He slew and cut down whatever man he reached.

riens nest qui contre ses cops dure
sespee qui est bonne et dure
et taillant · scet bien mettre en ouevre
bien se deffent et bien se cuevre
nil ne doubte mort ne prison
fors deshonneur et mesprison
et aussi tuit cil qui la sont
mervileusement bien le font

Messires bremons de la vote
estoit la com chastiaus sus mote
fors · et fermes · et deffensables
plus que gauvains li combatables
ces .ii. furent dales le roy
en grant couvine en bon arroy
percevaus estoit a sa destre
et bremons fu a sa senestre
bremons une hache tenoit
dont grans et rudes cops donnoit
a tant de cos tant dommes mors
il estoit grans · et lons · et fors
et plus vif cun alerion
et sot corage de lion
trop le doubtoient sarrazin
quen li avoient mal voisin
entour lui faisoit grant essart
se tieng celi pour trop musart
qui se metoit enmy sa voie
pour estre mors · et toute voie
dieu · honneur · amoit et vaillance
et si estoit nez de provence
li bons messire jehans de mors
en a plus de .l. mors
et messire guy li baveus
qui doit estre en nombre des preus
et ses .ii. fils si bien le font
quentre les bons des millleurs sont
ce sont .iii. chevaliers de france
qui aimment honneur et vaillance
et qui les vont par toute terre
ou on puet aler pour les querre
et quant tuit furent descendu
dedens la mer · jay entendu
et le me dist uns chevaliers
quil nestoient pas .viii. milliers
bons et mauvais · grans et petis
et ni ot pas de gens de pris
qui gens darmes sont appellez

None could endure under his strokes.
His sword, which is good and strong
And sharp, knew quite readily what to do.
He defended and protected himself well.
The man feared neither death nor capture,
Only dishonor and ignominy.
And also all those who were present there
Fought in an extraordinary fashion.

My lord Brémont de la Voulte
Like a castle above a moat there stood firm;
Strong, secure, and able in the defense,
Surpassing even the warrior Gawain.
These two stood by the king's side,
Magnificent in appearance as they did their duty.
Perceval was on his right
And Brémont was on his left.
Brémont wielded an axe with which
He dealt massive, devastating blows.
Each stroke meant a dead man.
He was tall and straight and powerful,
And more active than a hunting bird,
And he possessed a lion's courage.
The Saracens feared him greatly,
For in him they had an unpleasant neighbor.
They made a great effort against him.
Any man, I think, was a great fool
Who did cross his path that day
To be killed; and yet even so
He loved God, honor, and valor;
And so he had been born in Provence.
My good lord Jean du Morf
Killed more than fifty himself;
And my lord Gui le Baveux,
Who should be counted among the brave men,
Along with his two sons did so well
That of the able warriors they are among the best.
These three are French knights
Who love honor and valor,
And who go searching through the entire world,
Wherever one can go, to seek out these things.
And when they had all climbed down
From the ships into the sea, as I've understood,
And a knight did recount this to me,
They numbered no more than eight thousand,
The good and bad, the great and those of low degree;
And of soldiers of quality,
Those who are called men at arms,

plus de .vii^{c}. ou tout dales
quil avoient si com diron
bien .c. voiles ou environ
li sarrazin si com moy samble
ne les laissoient mettre ensamble
quau descendre se combatoient
main a main dont trop les grevoient
mais merveilles fu de leur trait
car chascuns rue · et lance · et trait
par tel guise et par tel effort
quonques ne treirent si fort
nonques si viguereusement
ne si tres orguilleusement
on ne vit sarrazins combatre
et sestoient mil contre .iiii.
toute voie li nostre firent
tant · quensamble tuit se meirent
quant il furent tuit assamble cccxxiiiiV
il a a chascun deaus samble
que li sarrazin desconfi
fussent · et en disoient fi
mauvaise gent mors y serez
si que ja nen eschaperez
ne ja pour lancier ne pour traire
ne porrez a garison traire
et li roys dist or y parra
qui au jour de hui bien il fera
certes li plus acouardis
doit estre ci preus et hardis
car il sont anemi de dieu
ne leur lairons place ne lieu
einsois tous les desconfirons
avant signeurs ferons ferons
si que li nostre se deffendent
et a bien batillier entendent
par tel maniere et par tel guise
que chascuns son compaingnon prise
ne homme ni a qui puist entendre
a nulle rien qua lui deffendre
longuement dura li assaus
li rois · bremons · et percevaus
li princes sa gent · et le conte
de quoy on tenoit moult grant conte
et li mareschal en tuerent
si grant plante et afolerent
quil gisoient mors et ocis
la cent · la mil · la vint · la sis
si que liaue de la marine

There were no more than about seven hundred;
For they had, we will say,
About a hundred sail or thereabouts.
Now the Saracens, so it seems to me,
Did not allow them to form in ranks together,
For they attacked as the Christians disembarked,
Hand to hand, and this pressed them very closely.
But the enemy's shooting was incredible.
For every man hurled lances, launched arrows
With such skill and such effort,
More powerfully than they had ever done.
Nor had anyone ever seen the Saracens
Fight with such great vigor
Or with such audacity either.
And they were a thousand against four.
Even so, our soldiers pressed forward
Until they formed ranks together.
After they had assembled in this fashion,
The thought then occurred to every man among them
That the Saracens should be defeated,
And so they said about this: "Fie on you,
Cursed people, a death is on its way
To you from which you will never escape;
Neither with your lance strokes or flights of arrows
Will you be able to find safety for yourselves."
And the king spoke out: "Now it will be here revealed
Who will today do this thing well,
For surely the most cowardly man
Must be brave and hardy in this place,
For these are the enemies of God;
And we will give them neither space nor quarter,
But rather wipe them out to the last man.
Forward, lords, let us strike and strike
So that our men will defend themselves
And be eager to fight well,
In such a manner and in such a fashion
That each man admires his companion;
No man who is here can attend
To anything but protecting his fellow."
The assault lasted a long time.
The king, Brémont, and Perceval,
The prince, his people, and the count,
A man who was quite highly esteemed,
And the marshals too killed
And wounded so many of the enemy
That they lay dead and slain,
Here a hundred, there a thousand, here twenty, there six;
And as a result of this the ocean water

dou sanc · avoit couleur sanguine
une huchie tout entour
tant fu fort et crueus lestour

Grans fu et crueus li assaus
li roys fu la preus et vassaus
et tuit cil de sa compaingnie
chascuns son compaingnon deffie
de bien faire et de batillier
pour les sarrazins detaillier
tant ferirent tant batilierent
que hors de la mer les chacierent
et maugre eaus prenirent terre
qui adont leur veist requerre
les sarrasins hardiement
il deist que ce hardement
vint de dieu qui les conduisoit
et a ce faire les duisoit
car cestoit hardement celestre
il avoit .i. port a senestre
devant la cite dalixandre
ou dieux fist venir et descendre
de rodes le bon amiral
et les freres de lospital
qui tuit estoient chevalier
fort puissant · apert et legier
il abillierent leurs chevaus
et issirent de leurs vaissiaus
bien et bel et arreement
sans avoir nul empeschement
puis se meirent en bataille
chascuns lespee qui bien taille
tenoit en sa main toute nue
adont ni ot resne tenue
tant quil venirent en la place
ou de sanc avoit mainte trace
puis crierent a mort a mort
mauvaise gent vous estes mort
et quant li sarazin veirent
les nostres qui les encloirent
en leure tournerent en fuie
ne celui ni a qui ne fuie
vers la porte de la cite
la navoit merci ne pite
car li nostre qui les chassoient
sans deffense les occioient
si que docire ne finerent
tant qua la porte les chasserent

Did have the red color of blood
For a good space all around,
So terrible and unremitting was the battle.

Cruel was the assault and heavy as well.
The king was brave there and valiant,
As were all those among his company.
Each man encouraged his companion
To do well and to give battle
In order to cut down the Saracens.
They struck, they fought so mightily
That they chased the enemy out of the water
And, despite them, gained the shore.
Whoever witnessed them pursue
The Saracens with courage
Would say that this bravery
Came from God, Who was guiding
And encouraging them to do so,
For indeed this was a valor from heaven.
There was a port on the left
In front of the city of Alexandria,
Where God brought it to pass that the good admiral
Of Rhodes arrived by ship and disembarked
Along with the brothers from the Hospital,
Who to a man were strong,
Powerful, skilled, and able knights.
They made ready their horses
And issued forth from their vessels
Well and prettily formed in ranks,
Without finding any difficulty.
Then they joined in the battle.
Every man wielded in his hand
A naked sword that cut well.
No one held back on the reins
Until they came to the place
Where there were many tracks of blood,
And then they cried: " To the death, to the death!
Cursed people, you are dead."
And when the Saracens saw
Our men, who had surrounded them,
They turned that very moment in flight.
There was not a one who did not flee
In the direction of the city gate.
There they found no pity or mercy
Because our men who were in pursuit
Cut them down defenseless
And did not finish with the killing
Until to the gate they chased them.

Il ot grant meslee a la porte
qui estoit grant et large et forte
que li sarrasin la voloient CCCXXVR
clorre et fermer mais ne pooient
car il y avoit tant de mors
quil ne marchoient que sus corps
qui gisoient gueule baee
lun sus lautre droit a lentree
et nompourquant a la parclose
maugre le roy elle fu close
quant il furent dedens la ville
li sarrasin plus de .xx. mille
monterent par dessus les murs
qui estoient haus et seurs
et ni avoit porte ne tour
qui neust arbalestre a tour
et qui ne fust tres bien garnie
de trestoute autre artillerie
et se mirent a grant deffense
mais li roys autre chose pense
quil ne les vuet pas assaillir
si tost pour paour de faillir
tantost fist sonner la trompette
li rois en signe de retrette
si que chascuns se retrey
long de la porte · et se trey
en une place grant et lee
seur le lieu ou fu la meslee
entre la ville et la marine
et ni avoit ronce nespine
li roys le fist pour .ii. raisons
qui nest pas drois que nous taisons
et vesa la raison premiere
apres dirons la darreniere
chascuns deaus estoit tous lassez
queu avoient mal assez
en la bataille et en la chace
si que li bons roys qui ne chace
seulement qua honneur venir
les voloit faire rafreschir
et les navrez aparillier
et leurs plaies bien abillier
quautrement il ne sen peust
aidier · se mestier en heust
lautre il voloit ses chevaus traire
hors des vaisseaus · car nul contraire
li sarrazin ne li faisoient
quen alixandre latendoient
aussi sa gent nestoient mie

A huge melee arose at the gate,
Which was tall and broad and strong,
For the Saracens intended
To close and lock it, but could not,
For the corpses were so many
That the enemy could walk only over bodies,
Who were lying mouths open,
One over there, another right in the entrance.
And nevertheless, in the end
Despite the king the gate was shut.
Once they were inside the city,
The Saracens, more than twenty thousand
In number, mounted the walls,
Which were high and secure,
And there was no tower or opening,
Which did not have an arbalest in turn,
And which was not provided well
With all manner of other artillery.
And they put up a fierce defense.
But the king had another thought,
For he did not wish to mount an assault
This quickly for fear of its failure.
The king had his trumpet
Sounded at once, as a signal of retreat.
And so every man drew far off
From the gate and assembled in
A field that was broad and wide
Where the fighting had been,
Between the sea and the town,
A spot with no bramble bush or pine.
The king did so for two reasons
It's not right we pass over in silence.
And here is the first reason;
The last we'll relate afterward.
Every man among them was tired out,
Having already been sorely tried
By the battle and pursuit.
And so the good king, who was only
Interested in gaining honor,
Thought to give them a rest
And attend to the wounded,
And bind up their wounds well.
Otherwise he could not avail
Himself of these men had he need.
The other reason: he wished to unload
His horses from the ships since the Saracens
Now offered no opposition,
Those awaiting him in Alexandria.
Also his host had not completely

tuit descendu de la navie
eins sabilloient pour descendre
si les li couvenoit atendre

Quant li cheval furent a terre
et trestoute sa gent grant erre
les menerent devers le roy
quil trouverent en grant conroy
tout a piet dessous sa baniere
qui nestoit mie toute entiere
eins y avoit plus de .c. tros
de saiettes et de garros
li roys moult volentiers les vit
et mout amiablement dit
a ses chevaliers et a tous
biaus signeurs rafreschissiez vous
car vous estes forment grevez
et faites penser des navrez
si tres bien quil ni ait deffaut
car certeinnement il nous faut
avoir conseil par quele guise
ceste grant cite sera prise
qui dont veist gens esmouvoir
cestoit merveille a dire voir
chascuns disoit se dieus me saut
jamais ne lariens par assaut
ne par siege ne par famine
par engien · par trait · ne par mine
ne nous ne la poons grever
non ne se doit pas esprouver
a ce qui ne puet avenir
se le roy laissons couvenir
il nous menra a tel pertuis
que nous en serons tuit destruis
car il sont bien mille contre un cccxxvV
einsi murmuroit le commun
toutevoie il se rafreschirent
et en bon estat se meirent
et trestous leurs chevaus aussi
tant quil furent bien rafreschi
li roys son conseil appella
et les sages qui furent la
et dist signeurs nous sommes ci
en assez bon point dieu merci
qui nous a fait si belle grace
que veu avons face a face
nos annemis · et desconfis
chascuns de vous en est tous fis
si len devons moult honnourer

Disembarked from the fleet,
But were making ready to land,
And he needed to wait for them.

When the horses had been landed
Along with his entire force,
All were brought in much haste to the king,
Whom they found in fine order,
His men together on foot, beneath his banner,
Who were by no means not all present
Since they counted more than a hundred
Wounds from arrows and lances among them.
The king quite eagerly looked at them
And said with great affection
To his knights and everyone else:
"Good sirs, refresh yourselves
Because you have been sorely taxed,
And have the wounded attended to
So skillfully that nothing is left undone.
For we certainly must
Take counsel about what plan
Will take this grand city."
Whoever then witnessed the men's reaction
Thought it surprising, to tell the truth.
Every one said: "So God save me,
We will never take the place by assault,
By siege, or by starvation.
Not with artillery, arrows, or mines
Can we do them any damage,
And so a man shouldn't try
To bring about what cannot happen.
If we let the king decide,
He'll lead us into such a trap
That we will be cut down to the last man
Because surely it's a thousand to one."
They muttered in this way together.
However they took refreshment
And put themselves in good order,
And did the same for all their horses
Until these were restored as well.
The king summoned his council,
As well as the wise men present,
And said: "Lords, we are here
In a quite good position, thanks to God,
Who has given us such good grace
That we have seen our enemies
Face to face and defeated them.
Every one of you knows it well.
And so we ought to honor highly,

et servir doubter et amer
car ce ne peust autrement
avenir sans li nullement
or resgardons que nous ferons
et se nous les assauterons
car hontes seroit de partir
sans eaus penre · ou sans assaillir
et pour ce a vous tous men conseil
or me donnez vostre conseil
si bon · que dieux y ait honnour
et nous ni aiens deshonnour

Quant il ot fine sa parole
quon ne tint mie pour frivole
einsois fu moult bien escoutee
deaus tous · et pesee et notee
il avoit la un amiraut
qui respondi et dist tout haut
sire jen diray mon penser
vous devez bien considerer
.v. choses qui sont a ce fait
si les vous diray tout de fait
li amiraus premiers parla
pour ce quil navoit homme la
qui deist mot · eins se taisoient
et lun lautre se regardoient
li amiraus dist sagement
sire vous veez clerement
que ceste cite est trop fort
et sa dedens si grant effort
de gent · quon ne les puet esmer
bien lavez veu en la mer
au descendre de vos galees
car se ce fussent gens faees
sestoient il de grant deffense
nonques ne vi gens sans doubtance
qui si vitement assaillissent
ne qui si bien se deffendissent
sire et vous les assaurrez
a ces murs ou il sont montez
il sont haus · larges et espes
et sa bonnes tours pres a pres
bien garnies dartillerie
et de gens qui ont la maistrie
de bien traire · car ce sont gent
qui de ce sont trop diligent
si que de toutes pars trairont
et vostre gent mehaingneront

Serve, respect, and love Him
Because otherwise this could not
Have happened, that is without Him.
Let us look to what we should now do,
Whether to assault them.
Indeed it would be a disgrace to depart
Without capturing or at least attacking the place.
And so I ask you all to advise me.
Give me counsel now good enough
To bring God honor
And permit us to avoid shame."

When he had finished his speech,
Which was not considered foolish in the least,
But was instead well attended to
By all present, weighed and noted,
There was among the group an admiral
Who answered, saying in a very loud voice:
"Sire, I'll tell you my thought.
You ought to consider well
Five things relevant to this undertaking,
And these I will describe straightaway."
The admiral spoke out first
Because no one who was there
Would have said a word; rather they kept silent,
And every one looked at the next man.
And the admiral said wisely:
"Sire, you see clearly
That this city is very strong,
While within is so great a force
Of men we cannot number them.
We have noted this well at the shore
As we disembarked from your galleys.
Even if these men were under some spell,
They were a powerful force.
Never, without doubt, have I seen
A host so quick to the attack,
Nor so able in its own defense.
Sire, and you intend assaulting
The walls they have manned?
These are high, wide, and thick,
With well-built towers closely spaced,
Nicely stocked with artillery,
And with soldiers who are greatly skilled
At shooting; for these are men
Who are quite diligent in this art
And will let fly at us from every direction
And cut your troops to pieces.

or resgardez que ce sera
quant chascuns de haut gettera
pierres caillaus et mangonniaus
il ni ara si petit diaus
qui ne vaille un bon chevalier
pour vos gens tuer et plaier
chascuns deaus vaurra .x. des vostres
einsi seront peri les nostres
et mis a mort sans cop ferir
si nest pas bon deaus assaillir
encor y a autre raison
il na ne borde ne maison
ne fortresce de ci au quaire
ou vous vous peussiez retraire
non jusques en jherusalem
encor opinion ha len
que vos gens ne puelent acroistre
einsois ne feront que descroistre
et natendes secours naye cccxxviR
de nul homme qui soit en vie
fors de dieu qui victoire donne
son pooir na terme ne bonne
si noseroie consillier
que vous alissiez essillier
vous · et vos gens darmes pour prendre
la forte cite dalixandre
especiaument par assaut
quant li prince et li amiraut
oyrent son entention
chascuns tint son opinion
et dirent tuit communement
et dun commun assentement
sire par nostre loyaute
il vous dit pure verite

Li roys qui bien la entendu
longuement na pas atendu
eins respondi courtoisement
signeurs · je say certeinnement
quil dit voir comme evangile
mais ce seroit chose trop ville
a moy · qui tant me sui penez
que je vous ay ci amenez
et savons heu tel honnour
a laide nostre signour
quonques chose plus honnourable
navint a nul de nous sans fable
car nous les avons detranchiez

Now imagine what will happen
When each of them from a great height
Is hurling rocks, stones, and shot from mangonels.
Then not even the tiniest among them
Will fail to equal a fine knight
For the killing and wounding of your men.
Each of them will be worth ten of yours.
We will be destroyed
And killed before a single blow is struck.
So it's no good to assault them.
And here's another reason why.
There's no fort or place of refuge,
No stronghold from here to Cairo
Where you might repair,
Not until Jerusalem.
Thus my thought about this is
That your force could not increase,
But will always only grow smaller.
And you do not expect aid or help
From any man who is now alive
Except from God, Who bestows victory.
His power is boundless, unrestrained.
Thus the only advice I dare give is
That you proceed to your own destruction,
You and your men, in seizing
The mighty city of Alexandria,
Especially by assault."
When the princes and the admirals
Heard his advice,
Everyone held to his view,
And they said all together
And with the same thought:
"Sire, upon our loyalty,
He speaks the pure truth."

The king, who had listened well,
Did not wait very long,
But answered courteously:
"Lords, I know for certain
That he speaks the gospel truth.
But this course would be too repugnant
To me, who have struggled so hard
To lead you all here to this place,
And we have gained such honor
Through the aid of Our Lord
—Not a man among us has ever had happen
Anything more honorable, and this is no lie.
For we have cut them to pieces,

ocis desconfis et chaciez
maugre leurs dens dedens leur ville
qui tant est grant fort et nobille
si que seinsi me departoie
a tous jours mais honnis seroie
et si me seroit reprouve
toudis com recreant prouve
se ne faisoie mon pooir
davoir la ville · et mon devoir
si que seigneur · je vous requier
quau jour dui soiez chevalier
preu et vaillant sans couardie
et dieus sera je ne doubte mie
pour nous · qui nous ha consillie
et qui pour nous ha batillie
et qui autrement le feroit
je croy que dieux sen courseroit
qui vuet venir o moy si veingne
qualer y vueil que quil avengne
lors respondirent tuit ensamble
nous disons ce que bon nous samble
sire alez ou que vous plaira
que nuls de nous ne vous laira
car nostre honneur et nostre vivre
est en vous pour morir et vivre

Quant li roy parler les oy
en son cuer moult se resjoy
si fist crier sans nul detri
par mi son ost a mout haut cry
que toute maniere de gent
grant · petit seigneur et sergent
le sievent tuit et sans faillir
car il vuet la ville assaillir
avec ce le crieur cria
que le premier qui montera
sus les murs · ara sans doubtance
mil petis florins de florence
les secons en ara .v^{c}.
le tiers .ccc. et ce fu sans
car chascuns plus sen avensoit
pour ce que gaaingnier pensoit
et quant on sceut ceste nouvelle
onques ni ot homme rebelle
eins firent son commandement
bien et bel et apertement
et se meirent en conroy
pour aler aveques le roy

Killed, dispatched, and chased the enemy
In the teeth of his resistance back to his city,
Which is large, strong, and worthy.
And to withdraw after all this
Would gain me reproof the rest of my life.
And also I will be accused
Always of being a proven coward
If I do not all in my power
To win the city and do my duty.
And so, lords, I require you
This day to be knights who are
Brave and courageous, not cowardly,
And God will be—I don't doubt at all
—On our side since He has counseled me
And waged war for our benefit.
Whoever would do otherwise,
I believe will earn God's anger.
Whoever wants to come with me, let him come,
For I will go whatever might happen."
Then they answered all together:
"We will say what seems good to us:
Go, sire, where you please,
And none of us will desert you
Since our honor and lives
Are yours, whether we live or die."

When the king heard them say this,
He rejoiced in his heart
And had it freely announced
Throughout his host with a loud voice
That all ranks of men,
The grand, the lesser lords and underlings,
Were to follow him, and without fail,
Because his plan was to assault the city.
At this moment, the herald cried out
That the first man who mounted
The walls would have for certain
A thousand small Florentine florins,
While five hundred would go to the second,
And the third would have three hundred,
Which made sense because every man would press
To the front since he thought to earn the reward.
And when this news became known,
No one among the men hung back,
But rather all followed his order,
Well and properly and openly.
And they formed into ranks
In order to go with the king.

Li gentils roys en appella
.i. sien chambrelain qui fu la
ce fu perceval de coulongne
qui mort ne prison ne ressongne
en audience li a dit cccxxviV
perceval entendez mon dit
vous mavez dit quen alixandre
a une porte qui est mendre
des autres · et que cest li lieus
de la ville · ou on porroit mieux
assaillir · et quon la porroit
penre par assaut qui vorroit
percevaus tantost respondi
certes sire je le vous di
veoir la poez outrement
et chascuns sans empeschement
cest la porte de laudouanne
nen la ville na drap ne panne
marchandise nespicerie
ne chose quon meinne en navie
avoir de pois ne saffren dort
que son le vuet mener a port
qui nisse hors par ceste porte
et ne me samble pas si forte
quon ne leust legierement
qui lassaurroit hardiement
li roy hucha son connestable
qui estoit personne notable
et aussi ses .ii. mareschaus
si commanda que li assaus
fust commenciez sans plus atendre
quil vuet sil puet la porte prendre
et percevaus vous y menra
qui le chemin vous apenra
percevaus fist tantost sonner
la trompette et haut resonner
tost furent rengie et serre
et en po deure ont tant erre
quil sont venus devant la porte
ou mainte personne fu morte
la fu li assaus commenciez
et percevaus sest avanciez
tant quil les a menez et mis
vis a vis a leurs annemis
la ot grant bruit et grant huee
grant brait grant trait · et grant meslee
car onques si fort ne neja
ne la gresle ne verrez ja
si dru · com saiettes et dars

The noble king summoned
One of his chamberlains there present.
And this was Perceval of Coulonges,
Who feared neither death nor capture.
And the king said so all could hear:
"Perceval, listen to what I say.
You have informed me that in Alexandria
There is a gate that is smaller
Than the others and that this is the place
In the city that can best
Be attacked and that whoever would
Do so could take it by assault."
Perceval answered at once:
"Surely, sire, I affirm this to you.
You can see it there beyond,
And so can every man without difficulty;
It's the Gate of the Douane.
Nor in the city is there any cloth or basket,
Any trade good or precious metal,
Anything that is to be taken to the ships,
Freight or the most delicate saffron
That, if it is to be carried to the port,
Does not come out through this gate.
Nor does it seem strong enough
That one could not take it with ease
Were it to be fiercely attacked."
The king called over his constable,
Who was a notable personage,
His two marshals as well.
And he gave orders that the assault
Should commence without further delay
Because, if he could, he intended to capture the gate.
"And Perceval, who will teach you the way,
Will guide you there."
Perceval had the trumpet sounded,
And it rang out loudly.
Quickly they formed ranks and fell in,
In a brief time advancing far enough
Until they came before the gate,
Where many a man lay dead.
The assault commenced at that point,
And Perceval moved forward
Until he had guided and led the men
Face to face with their enemies.
There was much noise and shouting,
Great confusion, many arrows shot, and heavy fighting.
For never has it snowed so hard
And you've never seen hail
This thick—as the arrows and darts

aplouvoient de toutes pars
pierres garros et espringales
la navoit trompes ne cimbales
qui les resbaudisse nenvoise
trop y ot mervilleuse noise
et se bien li nostre assailloient
li autre mieus se deffendoient

En ce point furent longuement
que lun assaut lautre deffent
mais li nostre petit gaaingnoient
que sarrazin maint en blessoient
de cops de pierres et de trais
qui deaus estoient souvent trais
.i. chevalier y ot descosse
qui ne fu pas mors de la bosse
car il cuidoit le feu bouter
en la porte et sans arrester
dune grosse pierre de fais
fu mors et tuez · et deffais
quant les nostres ce cop veirent
li pluseur arrier se treirent
car il en y avoit assez
et de bleciez et de lassez
quant percevaus vit la retraite
comme cils qui desire et gaite
le bien le profit et lonnour
et la grace de son signour
il not en lui que couroucier
tantost monta sus son courcier
et sen ala devers le roy
et li dist monsigneur je voy
vostre gent qui se sont retrait
pour la deffense et pour le trait
des sarrasins qui se deffendent
moult fort · et a bien traire entendent
et sire se dieux me doint joie cccxxviiR
pour le milleur conseilleroie
qua la porte vous treissiez
et vos gens y amenissiez
car tel y a qui se repose
et qui ne vuet aler ou nose
a lassaillir qui savanceroit
et qui bons et hardis seroit
moult y vaurra vostre presence
venez y sire sans doubtance
je croy que nous la gaaingnerons
et que tous les desconfirons

That they rained down from all sides,
Stones, lances, and arbalest bolts.
There was no trumpet or cymbal
To embolden or encourage them;
Quite incredible was the din.
And if our men attacked skillfully,
The others mounted a better defense.

A long time were they in this situation,
With one side attacking and the other defending.
But our army gained little
Because the Saracens wounded so many
With the blows from stones and arrows,
Which they continually launched at them.
There was a knight from Scotland
Who was not killed by the plague,
But he sought to set fire
To the gate, and without any delay
He was struck down
By a huge stone, undone and killed.
After our men saw this blow delivered,
A number drew back,
For they had then had enough,
What with wounds and fatigue.
When Perceval saw this retreat,
Like a man who desires and attends to
The good, the profit, the honor,
And the good graces of his lord,
The only feeling he had was anger.
At once he jumped up on his horse
And rode over to the king,
And he said to him: "My liege, I see
That your men are retreating
Because of the resistance and the shooting
Of the Saracens, who are defending themselves
Quite fiercely and are taking pains to shoot well.
And sire, so God give me joy,
My advice is that it would be best
For you to go to the gate,
And take your men along there.
For there are some who are resting
And who will not or dare not move to
The attack, but who would go forward
And be brave and worthy.
Your presence there would be worth much.
Go there, sire, for I believe
Without doubt we will take the place
And be the undoing of all the enemy."

li rois estoit sus son cheval
et les freres de lospital
environ lui trestout ensamble
si dist signeurs que vous en samble
lors dist chascuns quen loiaute
il disoit pure verite
li roys et ses gens se tenoient
entre .ii. portes et gaitoient
que sarrasin nississent hors
car ceuls de lassaut fussent mors
se par derrier les encloissent
pour ce gaitoient quil nississent
car on les vosist secourir
saucuns leur vosist sus courir
aussi li roys faisoit la garde
qui moult desire et moult li tarde
quil voie laudouanne ardoir
par quoy la cite puist avoir

Lors li roys descendi a pie
en sa main tint .i. fort espie
si que tuit et ensamble alerent
tant qua la porte se trouverent
la li assaus recommensa
la li plus couars savansa
la se moustra chevalerie
la vit on qui avoit amie
la chascuns si bien le faisoit
qua dieu et au monde plaisoit
li roys avoit au col sa targe
dont bien et sagement se targe
et certes il li est mestier
quil en sache bien le mestier
car les sarrazins des creniaus
li ont trait plus de .c. quarriaus
et li autre nen sont pas quite
car li sarrazin grant merite
attendent des nostres tuer
si ne font que traire et ruer
pierres · saiettes et garros
finablement et a bries mos
chascuns des nostres tant sefforce
quil bouterent par fine force
maugre tous le feu en la porte
lors chascuns son eschiele porte
pour drecier encontre les murs
la ne furent pas bien seurs
les sarrasins qui ens estoient

The king was mounted on his horse
With the brothers from the Hospital
At his side all assembled.
And he said: "Lords, what do you think?"
Each man then replied that in good faith
He was speaking the pure truth.
The king and his company took a position
Between two gates and waited to see
If the Saracens would sally forth
Because the men making the assault
Would be killed if encircled from the rear.
And so they watched if they were to mount a sally
For they did wish to provide support
Should any intend falling upon them.
And the king continued to protect them,
He who desired fiercely and was quite eager
To see the Gate of the Douane set ablaze,
In which fashion he could have the city.

Then the king dismounted.
In his hand he raised a mighty lance,
And so everybody moved out altogether
Until they found themselves at the gate.
There the assault began again;
There even the biggest coward moved forward;
There chivalry displayed itself;
There were seen those with lovers;
There every man did so well
It pleased God and the whole world.
The king hung his shield around his neck
And so protected himself well and wisely.
And he certainly needed
To readily recognize the necessity for this
Since the Saracens from the slits in the wall
Shot more than a hundred bolts at him.
And the others were hardly slighted
Because the Saracens expected a great
Reward from killing all our men.
So they did nothing but shoot and hurl
Stones, arrows, and darts.
In the end, to be brief,
Everyone of our men struggled so hard
That they succeeded by fine force
In firing the gate despite all of them.
Thereafter every man brought up his ladder
To place against the walls.
There the Saracens who were within
Were not very secure at all

quant ardoir la porte veoient
il y avoit .i. maronnier
qui ne fu pas le darrenier
dont je le prise et aimme et lo
qui se bouta dedens .i. tro
si com le tro dune privee
qui estoit vieille et si secree
que nuls homs ne sen donnoit garde
li maronniers le tro regarde
et tantost dedens se bouta
dont par la sus les murs monta
et tout en leure uns escuiers
qui estoit apers et legiers
monta apres a moult grant peinne
lors crierent a haute alainne
avant signeurs montez montez
li sarrasin espoventez
furent dou cry quant il loyrent
dont pluseurs des murs sen fuirent
il cuidoient certeinnement cccxxviiV
que nostre crestienne gent
fussent si fort et si yniaus
quil fussent ja sus les creniaus
pluseurs des nostres sessaierent
au pertuis · mais pas ni monterent
pour ce quil estoit si estrois
quil nen y pot monter que trois
or vous ay dit et raconte
comment li roys pleins de bonte
fist par ses gens le feu bouter
en la porte sans arrester
si quelle fu arse et brulee
et toute en cendre degastee
quant la force fu abaissie
dou grant feu la chevalerie
et trestout lost entierement
avec le roy joieusement
entrerent dedens la cite
la not sarrasin respite
que sil fu ateins ou tenus
qui ne fust a sa mort venus
nos gens queurent de rue en rue
chascuns ocist · mehaingne ou tue
tue en ont plus de .xx. mille
et coururent toute la ville
car tuit sarrazin sen fuioient
pour les nostres qui les sievoient
mais dieus qui tout scet et tout voit
qui tout gouverne et tout pourvoit

When they saw the gate burning.
There present was a sailor
Who was not the last among them,
For which I esteem, praise, and admire him,
And he made his way inside a conduit
Just like the drain for a privy,
And it was old and so closed up
No man had paid it any attention.
The sailor looked over this drain
And at once crawled inside,
And in that fashion scaled the walls.
And quite soon thereafter, a squire
Who was limber and lithe
Climbed up after him with a good deal of trouble.
Then these two cried out loudly:
"Forward, lords, climb up, climb up!"
The Saracens were terrified
By this outcry when they heard it,
And so many fled from the walls.
They thought without a doubt
That our Christian host
Was so strong and so agile
That they were above the ramparts.
Several of our men attempted
The conduit, but did not ascend that way
Because it was so narrow
That only three could get through at a time.
Now I have told you and related
How the king, full of virtue,
Had his men set fire
Again and again to the gate
Until it was torched and burned up,
And reduced entirely to cinders.
When the force of it
Had abated, the knights
And with all the host in its entirety,
Along with the king joyfully
Made their way within the city.
There no Saracen found any respite
But all who were discovered or taken
Did then meet their death.
Our men searched street by street,
Killing, cutting down, or slaying everyone.
More than twenty thousand were dispatched.
And they ran through the town,
But all the Saracens fled
Because of our men who were pursuing them.
But God, Who sees and knows all,
Who governs and provides for everything,

qui ses bons amis pas noublie
eins est toudis de leur partie
de son paradis acouri
et li noble roy secoury
et li donna pooir et force
pour ce quil voit bien quil sefforce
de lui servir et quil sest mis
a destruire ses anemis
questre ne peust nullement
se fait ne leust proprement
et savoit la chose ordonee
au taillant de sa bonne espee
si doit tous seuls avoir la gloire
de ceste tres noble victoire

Les gens le roy furent espars
par la cite de toutes pars
qui metoient tout a essil
la furent sarrasin si vil
que hors de la ville fuioit
chascuns qui fuir sen pooit
nonques si grant occision
ne fu des le temps pharaon
li roys avoit fait une emprise
einsois qualixandre fust prise
par son conseil que bon tenoit
que se dieux grace li donnoit
que la cite fust conquestee
il passeroit la test armee
tout outre pour .i. pont deffaire
quest entre alixandre et le quaire
sus une moult grosse riviere
si quil ordena sa baniere
quau pont droit tenist son chemin
afin que se li sarrazin
dou quaire venissent acourre
quil ne les peussent secourre
et pour ce aussi quon le sievist
une guya avoit qui li dist
sire venez je vous menray
et moult bien le chemin tenray
li nobles roys sachemina
et de chevauchier ne fina
par mi la ville · tant quil vint
a une porte ou plus de vint
estoient ocis a lentree
ceste porte estoit appellee
la porte dou poivre · et sestoit
li chemins qui au quaire aloit

Who does not neglect His good friends,
But rather is always on their side,
Hastened from His paradise
And assisted the noble king
And gave him power and force
Because He saw well that the man was doing
His best to serve Him and had undertaken
The destruction of His enemies,
Which could not have come to pass
Had He not properly seen to it.
And this thing He had ordained
With one stroke of His powerful sword.
And His alone should be the glory
Of this quite noble victory.

The king's men were dispersed
Throughout the city into every part,
And they drove out everyone.
The Saracens were so villainous
That each one who could
Then fled the city—if he was able to flee,
For there had been no slaughter
This great since Pharaoh's time.
The king had made a decision
Before Alexandria was taken
With the advice of his council,
Who thought it good, that if God gave him
The grace that the city might be conquered,
He would proceed, his head armed,
Beyond it to destroy a bridge
That lies between Alexandria and Cairo
Across a very big river.
And so he ordered his host
To make their way straight to the bridge
So that if the Saracens
From Cairo should come up
They would not be able to help them.
And in order that they might be led there,
The king obtained a guide, who told him:
"Sire, this way—I will direct you
And keep quite close to the path."
The noble king set out
And did not stop riding
Through the city until he came
To a gate where more than twenty
Were lying slain by the entrance.
This gate was called
The Pepper Gate, and it was
The road that led to Cairo.

quant li roys vint en mi les chans
il vit a milliers et a cens
les sarrasins par grans tropiaus cccxxviiiR
adonques il resgarda ceaus
qui furent en sa compaingnie
et trouva quil nestoient mie
de gens darmes plus de quarante
lors dist jay failly a mentente
je cuidoie que tuit venissent
et que la baniere sievissent
po somes pour le pont abatre
car se li sarrazin debatre
le nous vuelent · nest pas possible
eins est a nous chose impossible
trop sont et trop scevent de guile
sil sont entre nous et la ville
a ce que nostre gent entendent
a courir la ville · et il tendent
se nous estiens dacier trempe
si seriens nous tuit decope
et sil entrent en la cite
nos gens seront desbarete
car sa et la les ociront
pour ce quensamble pas ne sont
et se li nos cloent la porte
nous et no compaingnie est morte
einsi en son cuer devisoit
et a ces .v. choses visoit
li roy qui estoit esbahis
et aussi com tous estahis
et ce nestoit mie merveille
car uns chascuns deaus se merveille
coment la sestoit tellement
embatus et si folement
nompourquant tres bien satourna
et vers la ville retourna
et dist a ses gens jay erre
or chevauchons ferme et serre
tout ensamble et le petit pas
a ce cop dieux ne faurra pas
quil ne nous conforte et aide
se nous requerons son aide
mais il faut que nous nous aidons
et que tres bien nous deffendons
einsi li roys les confortoit
doucement et les enortoit
que chascuns feist son devoir
pour pris honneur · et gloire avoir

When the king came to open country,
He saw, by their hundreds and thousands,
The Saracens in huge troops.
Then he looked around
At those who were in his company
And found that they were not more
Than forty men at arms.
And he said: "I've failed in my plan.
I believed all would advance
And that they'd follow the banner.
Few are we to destroy the bridge,
For if the Saracens intend
To prevent us from it, it is not possible,
But rather will be impossible for us.
They are too many and know too many tricks
If they are between us and the city,
Because our men are intent on
Running through the city, and they hold fast.
Were we of tempered steel,
We'd still be cut to pieces,
And if they enter the city,
It will be the undoing of our army,
For they will kill them, some here, others there
Because they are not formed up.
And if they close the gate against us,
Our company and we ourselves are dead."
Thus he mulled this over in his heart
And looked to five things,
This king, who was discomfited
And as struck dumb as all the rest.
And this is hardly surprising
Because every single one of them wondered
How they had come so foolishly
To make their way to that spot.
Nevertheless he handled himself well
And turned back to the city,
And he said to his men: "The fault is mine.
Now let us move ahead in tight and secure formation,
All together and at a slow pace.
God will not fail us in these straits
And provide no aid or comfort
If we entreat for His assistance.
But we must help ourselves
And mount a spirited defense."
In this way the king consoled them
With soft words and encouraged
Each man to do his duty
In order to gain praise, honor, and glory.

Li bons rois a pris son retour
et voloit aler tout entour
la ville · pour faire fermer
les portes que ne say nomer
mais celles sont ce mest avis
qui sont devers ses anemis
or le gart dieux et sa compaigne
queinsois qua la porte reveingne
il encontrera telle encontre
quil seront bien .xx. mille contre
les .xl. qui sont o ly
si quil ni ara si joly
qui ne vosist bien estre a londres
a tout .i. panier plein dalondres

Li roys chevauche bellement
et li sarrazin fierement
le sievent · tant quil lont ataint
la fumiere deus lair a taint
car il estoient eschaufe
plus que dyable ne maufe
quant li roys percut le barnage
il tourna vers eaus son visage
et tantost a sa gent commande
que chascuns a bien faire entende
et que vers la porte se traient
en combatant · et ne sesmaient
que la dieux se combatera
et de leur partie sera
li sarrazin les assaillirent
et si dur assaut leur feirent
de ferir · de lancier · de traire
que ne le saroie retraire
mais la contenance diray
dou roy que ja nen mentiray
li roys seoit sus son destrier cccxxviiiV
et tenoit le piet en lestrier
fort · et ferme · et seurement
la se combat si durement
dune hache bien enferree
que riens a ses cops na duree
il est chastiaus il est fortresse
a ses gens · tant en tue et blesse
tant en abat tant en pourfent
quil en a ocis plus de cent
et li autre pas ne se faingnent
moult en ocient et mehaingnent
et tant ont fait quil se sont trais
a la porte par mi leurs trais

The good king begins his return
And intends to circle the entire
City in order to shut the gates,
Those I cannot name.
But the ones to the enemy's front
Were closed, I believe.
May God save him and his company!
For before he can regain the gate,
He will meet with such an encounter
That there will be twenty thousand against
The forty men who are with him.
And there will be no one so pleased
That he would not rather have been in London,
Even in desperate circumstances!

The king rode on impressively,
And the Saracens fiercely
Pursued until they reached him;
Their dust cloud fouled the air
Because they were angrier
Than any devil or evil spirit.
When the king spotted the force of warriors,
He turned his head in their direction,
And gave orders to his men at once
That every one should attend to doing well
And make his way toward the gate
By fighting and have no fear
Because God would do combat there
And be on their side.
The Saracens assailed them
And launched such a fierce attack
With the sword, the lance, and the bow
That words fail me to describe it.
But I will recount the demeanor
Of the king and lie about nothing.
The king was seated on his charger
And held his feet in the stirrups,
Strong and unmovable and steadfast.
There he fought so fiercely
With a well-sharpened ax
No one could endure his blows.
He is a castle, he is a fortress
For his men, kills, wounds so many,
Dispatches so many, undoes such a multitude
That he brought low more than a hundred.
And the others showed no weakness.
They cut down and maimed a great number
And accomplished so much they finally reached
The gate in the midst of their shooting,

et que la porte ont conquestee
par vive force et bien fermee
maugre toute la compaingnie
des sarrasins que dieus maudie
mais moult en y ot de bleciez
de trais · de lances · et despiez
et de leurs chevaus affolez
qui estoient las et foulez
et li sarrasin en perdirent
pluseurs que li nostres ocirent

Or est li roys en alixandre
si li couvient penser et tendre
comment il soit sires des portes
il y avoit de pluseurs sortes
de sarrasins qui les gardoient
et contre le roy les tenoient
li roys ala de porte en porte
nonques ni ot porte si forte
que par force ne conqueist
et que de ses gens ni meist
selonc sa possibilite
quil navoit pas grant quantite
de gent qui fussent bien haitiez
einsois estoient mal traitiez
lasse · foule · et travillie
mal peu et mal abillie
pour le chaut et pour la bataille
et si navoient pas vitaille
ne gouvernance a leur plaisir
quil navoient temps ne loisir
deaus aisier · ne de laler querre
ou de lavoir en mer nen terre
et li sarrasin furent mort
de ville et de honteuse mort

Cest la maniere cest la guise
comment alixandre fu prise
dou second assaut sans retraire
quonques pour lancier ne pour traire
ni ot celui qui se treist
arrier · ne qui se retreist
.xx. piez de terre · et se vous di
que ce fu en .i. venredi
et fu · pour ce que je ne mente
lan mil .ccc. .v. et sexante
landemain de la saint denis
einsois que li jours fust fenis

And they won the battle over the gate
By fine force, then shut it tight
Despite the whole army
Of Saracens—may God curse them!
But many of our men had been wounded
By arrows, lances, and spears
And driven mad were their horses,
Which were tired and hurt.
And the Saracens had lost some
That our men had killed.

Now the king is in Alexandria.
And he must determine and see about
How he should win mastery of the gates.
In several of them were garrisons
Of Saracens still keeping guard,
And they held out against the king.
The king went from gate to gate,
None of which was so impregnable
That he did not take it by storm
And station his own men there
As the opportunity presented itself.
For there was no great number
Of men who were then still fully fit;
Instead they were in quite bad shape,
Either tired, wounded, or spent,
Ill fed and badly provided for
Because of the heat and the battle.
And they did not have the supplies
Or leadership they would have liked,
For they had no time or opportunity
To drink or look for water
Or what they needed on land or from the ships.
And the Saracens from the town
Had died a shameful death.

This is the manner, this is the way
Alexandria was taken
By a second assault with no retreat;
For no man there ever drew back
Because of the lance blows or arrows;
Not a single man yielded
Twenty feet of ground.
And this was, I say, on a Friday.
The year was, and I do not lie,
Thirteen hundred and sixty-five,
The day after the feast of St. Denis
Before this day drew to an end.

Quant li roys ot ses bons amis
dedens toutes les portes mis
et chascune fu bien fermee
seurement et bien gardee
li jours passa li vespres vint
si que herbergier le couvint
car il avoit moult batillie
la journee · et moult travillie
il choisi une grosse tour
qui nestoit pas trop en destour
et sestoit forte et bien assise
ni a celui qui ne la prise
si commanda quon li herberge
et quon y prengne la herberge
pour herbegier une partie
de sa milleur chevalerie
et que lautre partie veille
par mi la ville · et se traveille
de bien gaitier · et que les gardes
ne soient lentes ne couardes
nendormies · et que bon gait cccxxixR
face chascuns · car en agait
sont sarrazins pour eaus destruire
sil veoient leur queue luire
mais la nuit pas bien ne gaiterent
car bien .x. mil dedens entrerent
des sarrazins et reponnirent
par une porte quil ardirent
si com li nostre avoient fait
qui la porte ardirent de fait
par force au darrenier assaut
dont ce fu moult tres grant deffaut
quonques ni ot home ne garde
qui sen donnast ne preist garde
ne qui veist fu ne fumee
saint marc est la porte nommee
et pluseurs qui nommer la vuelent
la porte dou poivre lappellent
la nuit en la tour reposa
mais heu petit repos a
fors que le repos que nature
puet donner en tele aventure
quon dit que cils fait la dorveille
qui dort de lueil et dou cuer veille
et sans doubte il se travilloit
na riens plus ses cuers ne veilloit
na riens voloit travillier
fors que sarrasins essillier

When the king had led all his beloved companions
Inside the safety of the city gates
And each of these had been well locked,
Secured, and ably put under guard,
The day ended, the evening came.
And so it was time to take shelter,
For he had fought much that day
And exerted himself mightily.
He chose a huge tower
Which was not far from the front of the city
And was strong and well-situated;
No man there didn't think it good.
And he gave the order that he be sheltered there.
And he had billeting made ready
For housing a portion of
Of his better warriors,
While the rest of them should stand watch
Throughout the town and take pains
To stay quite alert, and the guards
Should be neither lazy nor cowardly,
Nor asleep; rather every man
Should stand a good watch because Saracens
Were waiting in ambush to cut them down
If they saw their tails shining.
But that night a good watch was not kept
Because some ten thousand Saracens
Entered the town and made their way
Through a gate that they had in fact fired,
Just as our own men had done,
Who had set the gate ablaze
By force during their final assault.
And it was a very grave mistake
That at no time was there any man or guard
Who stood to or kept watch,
Or who spied fire or smoke.
This gate is called St. Mark's,
And some, who wished to name it,
They called it the Pepper Gate.
During the night he made his bed in the tower,
But he took little rest this day,
Except for the sleep nature
Can make available at such times,
For, as one says, the man was dozing,
Whose eyes slept, but heart stayed vigilant.
And doubtless he contemplated,
With his heart wakeful for no other cause,
How he wished to bring about
The destruction of the Saracens and nothing else.

Clere fu la nuit et serie
li jours vint · la gaite sescrie
dedens .i. cor sarrasinois
seigneurs · li alexandrinois
sont tuit mis a desconfiture
armez vous tuit grant aleure
et ociez le remenant
qui sont en la ville manant
li gentis roys pleins de noblesse
se leva et oy la messe
humblement et devotement
et tuit li autres ensement
de la tour aval avalerent
et puis sus leurs chevaus monterent
bien arme et bien abillie
et de leur fait bien consillie

Conte vous ay dou venredi
or vous diray dou samedi
comment la chose est avenue
en alixandre a une rue
quon claimme la rue dou poivre
des autres forment se desoivre
car cest la grant rue a droit dire
entre y furent tire a tire
celeement en larrecin
plus de .x. mille sarrazin
par mi la porte quil ont arse
dont la cendre est ja toute esparse
li roys de ce riens ne savoit
et pour ce grant mestier avoit
de chevauchier seurement
et de li garder sagement
car il navoit pas avec li
si com dire oy lay celi
qui y estoit · plus de .l.
hommes darmes · ou de .lx.
toute voie y fu qui li dist
dont il reprist moult et maudist
ceus qui le gait faire devoient
quant de ce fait riens ne savoient
li roy fu au piet de la tour
et sa gent li furent entour
tuit prest de faire leur devoir
mais vraiement petit pooir
ont · se dieux nest de leur bataille
qui toudis pour les siens bataille
car .l. contre .x. mille
ce nest mie pareille bille

Clear was the night and serene.
Day broke, and the watch cried out
In his Saracen horn:
"Lords, the Alexandrians
Have been vanquished, one and all.
Let every man take up arms
At once to kill the last of the enemy
Who remain within the city."
The worthy king, a man of great nobility,
Rose and heard mass
Humbly and devoutly,
While all the rest in turn
Descended from the towers
And mounted their horses,
Men armed well and properly equipped,
Well advised about what to do.

I've told you about Friday.
Now I'll speak of Saturday,
What happened then.
In Alexandria is a route
Called the Pepper Street.
It differs much from the others
For it's the main street, properly speaking.
Row by row, like thieves,
More than ten thousand Saracens
Made their way secretly up it
Through the gate that had burned,
Whose ashes were then still spread all around.
Of this the king knew nothing
And so very much had
To ride on with caution
And take great care
Because he had as companions
—As I have heard tell from someone
Who was present—no more than fifty
Knights, perhaps sixty.
In any case, there was someone who told him,
And he grew bitterly angry, cursing
Those who were to have kept watch
Since they knew nothing of what took place.
The king stood at the foot of the tower,
His men all around him,
Each one ready to do his duty,
Yet truly little power would have
Been theirs had God not been among the host,
Who always battles on the side of His people,
Since fifty against ten thousand
Is hardly an equal fight.

Par mi la ville chevaucha
li gentis roys qui detrancha
maint sarrazin en combatant
quil en y avoit encor tant
qui laiens estoient tapis cccxxixV
qua merveille · mais lun na pis
que li autres · car sans doubtance
tuit sont puni dune sentence
cest par le tranchant de lespee
autre grace ni est donnee
et si sestoient rafreschis
li uns mieus et li autres pis
briefment tant se sont combatu
tant en ont mort et abatu
tant ont sa et la chevauchie
que hors de la ville chacie
les ont · et encor les chassoient
par mi les champs · et les tuoient
si quil en y ot tant de mors
dedens la cite et dehors
que je ne le saroie dire
nuns bons clers nombrer ou escrire
et quant li roys vit quil estoient
si desconfit · quil ne sosoient
mais aprochier de la cite
il couvint de necessite
quen la ville se retournast
et que ses gens bien ordonnast
sil voloit quelle fust tenue
bien gardee et bien deffendue

Li roys dedens la ville entra
quonques sarrazin nencontra
grant ne petit · ne fol ne sage
amiraut · ne prince · ne page
car tuit avoient fait la vuide
li roys la cite tenir cuide
mais nest pas bon de ce cuidier
car il faurra a son cuidier
questranges y avoit pluseurs
chevaliers et autres signeurs
qui ne loent pas quon la tengne
pour nulle chose qui avengne
li gentils roys sans detrier
fist par mi tout son ost crier
que toute maniere de gent
gens darmes · vallet et sergent
fussent tuit a une assamblee

Through the town rode
The noble king, who disemboweled
Many a Saracen as he fought on
Because there were still many of the enemy
Who had hidden themselves there,
Which was surprising, but every one among them
Was doubtless treated no worse than any other.
All were served with the same sentence:
Which was to be cut down by the sword.
They were allowed no other mercy.
And they were refreshed,
Some better and the others worse.
In brief, they fought so hard,
Killed and wounded so many,
Riding here and there
Until they chased them
From the town, giving pursuit
Through the fields as they slaughtered them.
In the end, there were so many corpses
Inside the city and beyond the walls
That I could not tell you,
Nor could an apt clerk number or count them.
And when the king saw they had been
So undone that they no longer
Dared approach the town,
It then behooved him
To return inside the city
And put his men in good order
If he intended that the place be held,
Guarded well, and ably defended.

The king entered the city
And met no Saracen on the way,
None of high or low degree, no fool, no sage,
Admiral, prince, or servant.
For they had abandoned it entirely.
The king thought to hold the town,
But this intention did not turn out good
Because he failed to accomplish what he wished,
Since there were a number of foreigners,
Knights and lords of other degree
Who did not advise holding it
No matter what the circumstances.
Without delay the noble king
Had it announced throughout his host
That all ranks of men,
Knights, squires, and soldiers,
Should gather together

en une place grant et lee
quest entre la ville et la mer
autrement ne la say nommer
li roys entre sa gent estoit
et avoir leur conseil voloit
comment il se doit maintenir
et son puet la ville tenir
quant il furent tuit en la place
il leur dist signeurs la dieu grace
nos annemis sont desconfis
et ceste ville avons conquis
or regardons que nous ferons
et comment nous la garderons
car de vous la victoire vient
et pour ce doy et me couvient
par vostre bon conseil user
aucuns y ot qui sans muser
et sans conseil · li respondirent
par tele maniere · et deirent
que par s. pierre le martyr
il se voloient departir
et que tenir ne la porroient
et pour ce plus ni demourroient
li roys leurs dist signeurs pour quoy
si dieux me doint joie je croy
que se nous sommes tuit preudomme
et tuit bonnes gens einsi comme
jusques a ci avons este
que par force et par poeste
ceste cite deffenderons
contre tous et la garderons

Un en y ot qui se leva
et qui audience rouva
et il fu tres bien escoutez
si li dist sire ne doubtez
que ceste ville a si grant tour
que son voloit chascune tour
garnir les murs et les creneaus cccxxxR
de gens darmes bons et yniaus
vous navez mie le vintisme
non se dieux me gart le centisme
de gens darmes quil couvenroit
au garnir · dont il avenroit
que li sarrazin sil voloient
par .v^{c}. lieus y entreroient
et toute vostre artillerie
est despendue et essillie

At a place that was wide and broad
Between the town and the sea.
I don't know what else to call it.
The king went among his men
And intended to have their advice
About what he should do,
And whether the town could be defended.
When they had all assembled,
He said to them: "Lords, by the grace of God
Our enemies have been undone,
And we have conquered this city.
Now let us look to what we will do
And how we will keep possession of the place.
But this victory is yours,
And so I should and must do
Whatever you are good enough to advise."
Some, giving the matter no thought,
Answered unadvisedly
As here follows, saying
That by St. Peter the martyr,
They were eager to depart
And they could not hold out in this city
And so intended remaining there no longer.
The king said to them: "Lords, what is your reason?
So God give me joy, I believe
That as we are all worthy knights
And all the same brave men,
Just as we have been to this point,
By force and might
We will defend this city
Against all and hold it."

One among them arose
And asked to be heard.
And he was well listened to.
He said to the king: "Sire, don't doubt
This city has walls of such length
That if the intention were to garrison
Every tower, all the walls and battlements
With able and agile men at arms,
You do not have a twentieth,
No, so God protect me, not even a hundredth
Of the soldiers who are needed
To man it. And thus it would happen
That the Saracens, if they liked,
Could enter in five hundred places.
Moreover, all your artillery
Is spent or out of action.

encor y a un autre point
vous navez de vitaille point
et chascuns la hors la tendra
si que saiens point nen vendra
ne vous nen porrez point avoir
pour promesse ne pour avoir
nos chevaus nont paille ne fein
si que eaus et nous morrons de fein
et sest li soudans pres de ci
qui amenra je le vous di
par .vc. fois .vc. mil hommes
a si po de gent que nous sommes
et seront fres et bien peus
si que sire trop deceus
seriens de ci demourer
pour nous tous faire devourer
car po de chose est sans doubtance
de nous · encontre sa puissance
meesmement en son pais
et de li sommes tant hais
quil nen penroit .i. a rencon
pour la cite de besencon
et natendez secours naye
fors dou ciel · je ne doubte mie
or resgardez que ce sera
quant li soudans chevauchera
tuit serons pris a la ratiere
si que sire en nulle maniere
je ne conseille la demeure
partons nous tuit car il est heure
vraiement ce fu le vicomte
de toureinne qui dist ce conte
et ceste response bailla
dont li roys moult se mervilla
pour ce quil li avoit promis
que sen pais des annemis
par engin · ou par hardiesse
poooit penre aucune fortresse
que un an entier le serviroit
et que de li ne partiroit
avec ce tuit li estrangier
en tout sans muer ne changier
lavouerent et lensuirent
et au roy tout en haut deirent
quil nen couvenoit plus parler
car il sen voloient raler
et que sans doubte il ne porroient
tenir la cite · ne voloient

There's even a further point:
You have no provisions to speak of,
And those outside will hold them back
With nothing then here offered for sale;
Nor could you obtain any
For promises or money.
Our horses have neither straw nor grain
And so will starve along with us.
Moreover, it is the sultan who is nearby,
And will bring, I tell you,
Five hundred times five hundred thousand troops
Against us, who are as few as we are,
And they will be fresh and well fed.
So, sire, you'd be quite mistaken
To make a stand in this place
And thereby cause us to be wiped out;
Indeed, beyond a doubt we do not count
For much against his force,
Especially in his homeland.
And by him we are so hated
That he'd accept no ransom for any man,
Even if it were the city of Besançon.
Also, you expect no aid or relief
Save from heaven, this I do not doubt.
Look now to what will happen
When the sultan rides in.
We'll all be cornered like rats in a trap.
And so, sire, I don't advise
Remaining here under any conditions.
Let us all withdraw since now is the time,
Truly." It was the viscount of Tourenne
Who made this speech
And gave such an answer,
Which very much surprised the king
Because the man had sworn to him
That in the enemies' country
Through cunning or bravery
He'd prove able to capture any fortress;
And that he'd remain in his service an entire year;
And that he'd never leave his side.
With this, all the foreign knights, and no exception,
Agreed with and supported
His response, not challenging or changing a word
And they loudly affirmed to the king
That there was no more need of talk
Because they thought to withdraw
And that, no doubt, they were quite unable
To hold the city and had no will to do so.

Quant li roys oy ceste note
dedens son cuer forment la note
mais onques ne sen effrea
ne sa maniere nen mua
eins respondi arreement
biau sire je voy bien comment
vous consilliez en verite
que ne tenons pas la cite
et quelle nest mie tenable
comment quelle soit deffensable
et que tels en est li peris
com de nous tous estre peris
mais il me samble le contraire
vesci pour quoy ne men puis taire
ceste cite est de grant garde
a gent qui est lente et couarde
ou paresseusse ou endormie
qui deffendre ne sose mie
mais .i. vaut vint et .i. vaut cent
qui hardiement se deffent
especiaument en ce cas
car qui deffent de haut en bas
il a des .c. pars lavantage cccxxxV
ne ce nest que forsen et rage
dassaillir encontre ces murs
qui sont haus · larges et seurs
et se bien nous en est cheu
dieux la fait vous lavez veu
nous avons pris ceste cite
maugre eaus et contre leur gre
et si les avons desconfis
chaciez hors · navrez · et occis
tant quelle nous est demouree
fort et seure et bien fermee
et sest plus fort chose dou prendre
mil fois · que ce nest dou deffendre
nous avons arsons arbalestres
espringales · garroz · saiettes
et dartillerie tout plain
quil nous ont laissie tout de plain
en ces tours sont et en ces portes
dont elles sont assez plus fortes
si les baterons de leur verge
par saint julien · qui herberge
les pelerins · pas ne macorde
a vostre dit eins men descorde
dou tout en tout tant comme aus vivre
nest pas bele chose destre yvre
cest bon de vivre sobrement

When he saw this turn of events,
The king took it all very much to heart,
Yet never took fright on this account;
Not one bit did his manner change,
But instead he quickly answered:
"My good lord, I see quite well
That in truth you counsel
We do not hold this city;
And that it cannot in any way be held,
No matter how defensible it is;
And that the danger for us is such
That we will all be destroyed.
However I think the opposite.
And here's why I cannot remain silent.
This city is difficult to protect
Only for an army that is slow and cowardly,
One lazy or full of sleep,
An army that hardly dares put up a fight.
But one man who mounts a vigorous defense
Is worth twenty; one is worth a hundred,
Especially in these circumstances,
For whoever defends from high to low
Has a hundred times the advantage.
It would only be madness and insanity
To assault walls such as these,
Which are high, wide, and impregnable,
And if good fortune has befallen us,
God is responsible, as you have seen.
We have taken this city
Despite them and against their will,
And we have so undone the enemy,
So pursued, wounded, and killed them
That it remains quite strong,
Secure, and well-enclosed for us.
And taking a city is a thousand times
More difficult than it is to defend one.
We have catapults, arbalests,
Spring guns, bolts, arrows,
And a great deal of artillery
That they left here for us all around
Mounted in the towers and above the gates,
Which makes them even more secure.
So we'll beat them with their own stick,
By St. Julian, who protects
Pilgrims. I don't agree at all
With what you counsel; instead I disagree
With all of it. As far as provisions are concerned,
It's no good to be drunk.
It is good to live soberly

car on en vit plus longuement
qui bien querroit il trouveroit
saiens · dont on gouverneroit
tout cest ost .iiii. mois ou .vi.
ou .vii. ou .viii. ou .ix. ou .x.
ou par aventure encor plus
qui est grant chose · et au seurplus
nous sommes pres de nostre terre
senvoierons des vivres querre
et tout ce quil nous couvenra
ne le soudant pas ne venra
si tost · que nous naiens secours ·
de nostre pais · ou daillours

Lempereur de coustentinoble
qui a le cuer vaillant et noble
venra · se ci sommes assis
einsi le nous a il promis
et aussi venront ceus de rodes
se dieux me gart · onques herodes
ne fist si mal que nous ferons
quant de ci nous departirons
especiaument par tel guise
et que feront ceuls de venise
ceus de gennes · ceuls dalemaigne
de france · descosse · despaingne
ceus de behaingne et de hongrie
certeinnement je ne doubt mie
que cil ne doient acourir
qui vuelent a honneur venir
car il na en trestout le monde
tant comme il tient a la reonde
place qui soit si honnourable
ne reputee si notable
comme est ceste place ou nous sommes
je ne donroie pas .ii. pommes
de cuer · ou lonneur est si morte
qui dou tenir ne se conforte
et qui seroit a pampelune
a bruges · a gant · ou a brune
se deveroit il venir ci
et nous y sommes dieu mercy
telement · que vous en serez
toute vostre vie honnourez
aussi seront tuit qui ci sont
pour ce qua la prendre este ont
et savons dieu de no partie
qui a ceste emprise bastie
que ja ne se fust soustenue

Because that path leads to a longer life.
Whoever searches diligently will here find
Here within what will sustain
This host for four months, or six,
Or seven, or eight, or nine, or ten,
Perhaps longer still,
And this is a great advantage; moreover
We are close to our homeland.
And we'll send for foodstuffs
As well as everything else we need.
Nor will the sultan come so quickly
That we won't first have help
From our country or elsewhere.

The emperor of Constantinople,
Whose heart is noble and valiant,
Will come if we stand fast here.
This he has promised us.
And the men of Rhodes will sail here too.
So God protect me, Herod never
Did anything as wrong as will we
When we abandon this place,
Especially under such circumstances.
And what will those from Venice do,
Those from Genoa, from Germany,
Those from France, Scotland, and Spain,
The men from Bohemia and Hungary?
Certainly I don't doubt at all
That men eager for honor
Will hurry to our side.
For in all the world,
As far as it reaches in its compass,
There's no place so full of honor,
Or reputed to be so notable
As the place where we are now.
I consider not worth two apples
The heart in which honor is so dead
It does not rejoice in holding out.
And that man who would be at Pamplona,
At Bruges, at Ghent, at Bron,
He is bound to make the passage here.
We are there already, God be thanked,
In such fashion that for it you'll be
Honored very day of your life.
As will all those who are here,
For they've been present at the capture of the city.
And we have God on our side,
Who has inspired this enterprise,
Which never could have been seen through

selle ne fust de lui venue
il sen puet aler qui vorra cccxxxiR
et qui bien vuet · il demourra
mais onques chose si honteuse
ne fu · ne si maugracieuse
ne dont honneur tant abaissons
se ceste fort cite laissons
qui porroit tenir ce recet
mieux vaurroit quautre .xvii.
que de promission la terre
en porriens avoir et conquerre ·
avec tout le pais dentour
si que jaray si grant tristour
sil couvient queinsi me departe
que foy que je doy sainte marthe
jamais naray parfaite joie
pour vostre honnour et pour la moie
que je tieng pour toute perdue
se courages ne vous remue
si vous pri que chascuns demeure
quautrement il se deshonneure
quant il ot fine sa parole
les estranges dont je parole
respondirent quil sen iroient
et que tenir ne la porroient

De coustantinoble la mis
avoit li papes · et tramis
com legat le bon patriache
nest plus preudomme que je sache
si que tres bien les sermonna
et moustre en son sermon a
comment messires s. thomas
de bien faire onques ne fu las
eins fu en ynde la majour
pour lamour de nostre signour
et y morut piteusement
pour bien faire et non autrement
aussi vous estes ci venu
disans · que vous estes tenu
pour faire son tres dous service
dont le partir yert trop grant vice
et sarez perdu et defait
tout le bien que vous avez fait
car bien et deshonneur ensamble
ne puelent estre ce me samble
aussi dit on que cils qui sert
sil ne parsert son louier pert
bien leur moustra la sainte page

Had this not come from Him.
Whoever wishes can leave,
And the man who wants can remain.
Yet never was anything as shameful
As this, or as ill-considered,
Nor will we otherwise destroy our honor as much
If we abandon this mighty city.
Every one who can defend this citadel
Will have the glory of seventeen others
Because we could conquer
And occupy the promised land
As well as all the surrounding territories.
So my sorrow will be so grievous
If I must withdraw in such a fashion
That, by the faith I owe St. Martha,
Perfect joy will never be mine
Because I will consider forfeited
All your honor and my own
—That is, if your hearts remain unchanged.
And so I beg every man to stand fast,
For otherwise he will be dishonored."
When he finished speaking,
The foreigners I have mentioned
Answered that they would go away,
For they could not hold the place.

The pope had appointed and sent
As legate the virtuous patriarch
Of Constantinople.
No man I know is worthier,
And he preached a powerful sermon to them
In which he recounted in what he said
How my lord St. Thomas
Never grew weary of virtuous deeds,
But was even in greater India
Because he loved Our Lord
And there died miserably
Because for no other reason he wished to do good.
"All of you came here for the same reason,
Stating you are firm in your resolve
To perform His very sweet service.
So retreating would be a terribly grievous sin.
And you would forfeit thereby
And lose all the good works you have done
Because dishonor cannot live
With virtue, such at least is my view.
As we say, whoever serves but does not complete
His service forfeits his wages."
He preached the holy Gospel eloquently,

mais il perdi tout son langage
quil respondirent brief et court
nous en yrons la vie y court
nous ne volons mie morir
seaus de fain sans cop ferir
ne ce nest riens de no pooir
contre le leur a dire voir
tele fu la conclusion
de toute leur entencion

Quant li roys vit tout clerement
quil ne les porroit nullement
retenir · par son biau parler
einsois sen voloient aler
il monta tantost a cheval
entre lui et son mareschal
et chevaucha dedens la ville
et sachiez certeinnement quil le
faisoit pour donner exemplaire
que tout einsi devoient faire
et pour donner cuer a sa gent.
mais pour .ii. mil mars dargent
ne le sievissent eins tournerent
et en leur galee monterent
et pluseurs autres les sievoient
qui leur signeur tout coy laissoient
li roys entour lui resgarda
et de toutes gens ne trouva
quenviron .vi^{xx}. hommes darmes
lors dist · honneur · amours · et dames
que direz vous quant vous verrez
ces gens qui sont si esserrez
certes jamais naront honnour
par droit · fors toute deshonnour ·
et dautre part les sarrazins cccxxxiV
acouroient tous les chemins
et entroient a grans monciaus
en la ville comme pourceaus
si ne les peust soustenir
ne lestour encontre eaus tenir
car trop estoient durement
si se retrey sagement
et vers ses galees tourna
quailleurs ressort ne retour na

Li roys monta en sa galee
a cuer triste a face esplouree
trop fu courcies trop fu dolens
il navoit dalixandre a lens

But all his words were in vain
Because their answer was curt and brief:
"We will leave from here; life goes on.
We have no wish to perish from hunger
In this place while never striking a blow,
And our power is nothing
Compared to theirs to tell the truth."
Such was the result
Of all their dedication.

When the king saw quite clearly
He could not in any way hold them back
With his fine words,
But they were intent on leaving,
He mounted his horse that instant
And, accompanied by his marshal,
Rode back into the city.
Know for a fact that he
Did this to offer an example
Of what every man should do
And to encourage his army.
But for two thousand silver marks
They would not have followed him,
But turned, instead, and embarked on their galleys.
And many others did the same,
Who abandoned their lord without a word.
The king looked behind him,
And of all the host he didn't see
More than twenty-six knights.
Then he said: "Honor, love, and ladies!
What will you say when you see
These men drawn up here in their ranks?
Surely they will never have any claim
On honor but complete dishonor instead.
And at that very moment, the Saracens
Were racing down all the city streets,
And they were entering the city
In great troops like boars.
He could not have held them back,
Nor put up a fight against them
Because they were too many by far.
And so he wisely withdrew
And returned to the galleys,
For otherwise there was no course or choice.

The king embarked on his galley,
His heart heavy, his face covered with tears.
He was quite angry and full of sorrow.
There was no man this miserable

personne qui fust si dolente
il se complaint il se demente
des yex pleure dou cuer souspire
homs vivans ne vous saroit dire
son meschief · trop se desconforte
et dist honneur or yes tu morte
certes dou tout perdu tavons
sans recouvrer · bien le savons
li gentis roys pleins de vaillance
qui vit ceste desordenance
fist tantost mander le legat
il vint et congnut son estat
moult doucement le reconforte
moult li prie moult li enorte
quoublie sa triste pensee
alons de galee en galee
sire fait il · et les prions
pour vir se nous les porrions
faire demourer par nul tour
et plus ne soiez en tristour
li roys y ala sans attendre
mais onques ne vorrent descendre
pour parole ne pour priere
ne nen firent samblant ne chiere
si retourna dont il venoit
et vit bien quil li couvenoit
oubeir · quar li estrangier
li font faire le plait ogier
cest a dire contre son gre
faut quil face leur volente
.ii. jours demoura sus le port
en tel peinne et en tel descort
tant que yaue douce fu faillie
lors fist ordonner sa navie
et vers chypre adressa sa voie
or prions dieu qui le convoie
car fortune li est contraire
qui li a este debonnaire

Li roys en son pais retourne
sa nef se trestourne et bestourne
car une tempeste leva
si grant · que ci ne la ne va
quil ne cuide quelle saffonde
ou fons de haute mer parfonde
li vens fu gros · la mer fu tourble
londe de la mer liaue tourble
si quil ni avoit si hardi
qui neust cuer acouardi

From Alexandria to Lens.
He bemoaned his lot, he went mad,
Crying from his eyes, sighing from the heart.
No man alive could describe
His misfortune; he was quite disconsolate
And said: "Honor, now you lie dead!
Surely we've forfeited you for good;
We'll never regain you—well we know it."
The noble king, full of valor,
Who looked upon this disorder,
Summoned the papal legate at once.
The man came and understood his difficulty.
Quite tenderly he offered the king consolation,
He begged him firmly, exhorted him fervently
To forget his sad thoughts.
"Let's go from galley to galley,
Sire," he said, "and implore them,
To see if we could find
Some reason to make them stay.
And so you should be sad no more."
The king proceeded without hesitation,
But those men would never disembark,
Not for any word or any prayer.
And gave him no sign or indication. .
So he returned whence he had come
And saw clearly he had no choice
But to submit, for the foreign knights
Had made him do the pleading of Ogier;
In other words, against his will
He must do what they wanted.
Two days he remained near the port
In great misery and suffering
Until the fresh water was exhausted.
Then he ordered the fleet assembled
And set out for Cyprus.
Let us now pray God escorts them,
For Fortune opposes him,
Who before had been gracious to the king.

The king returns to his own country.
His ship tosses and turns on the water
Because a storm so great has come up,
They cannot follow any heading, this way or that,
Which will, he thinks, save the boat from sinking
Into the fountain of deep water.
The winds blow strong, the ocean is roiled up,
The waves trouble the sea water
So much that no man, however brave,
Did not have then a coward's heart.

et trestuit li autre ensement
estoient mene telement
quil cuidoient bien estre mort
mais dieux qui ne vuet pas la mort
dou pecheur · le roy deffendi
et si seurement le rendi
en chypre dedens sa maison
en la cite de nimesson
quant li furent tuit arrive
ni ot estrange ne prive
qui en son cuer ne se resjoie
et qui ne meinne feste et joie
quant il ont passe tel fortune
aussi toute la gent commune
dou pais · grant feste en feirent
de leurs galees descendirent
et aus hostelx se hesbergierent
a grant joie se desarmerent
assez briefment li estrangier cccxxxiiR
ou le roy trouva maint dangier
se departirent sa et la
et briefment chascuns sen ala
.vi. furent dont je vous diray
les noms · que ja nen mentiray
chascuns avoit o li sa route
vesci leurs nons je nen fais doubte
mais einsois quil se departissent
ne que de nimesson ississent
li roys les paia richement
et leur donna moult largement
or argent · vaisselle · joiaus
dras de soie et chevaus nouviaus
et a son pooir les paioit
selonc ce que chascuns estoit
aussi fist il au remenant
qui en son pais sont manant

Li roys en chypre sejourna
qui pas longuement sejour na
le ne fait que voies trouver
pour sarrasins nuire et grever
il fist la .i. moys de sejour
.i. matinet au point dou jour
appella un sien chambellain
que chascuns aimme et je aussi laim
chevaliers est de grant renom
bremont de la vote a nom
et li dist bremont chers amis
nous dormons et nos anemis

And all the other ships were driven
In much the same way,
So that they all expected to die.
But God, who does not desire the death
Of sinners, protected the king
And returned him in safety
To Cyprus, to his dwelling there
In the city of Limassol.
When they all arrived,
There was no man, foreign or from his household,
Who did not rejoice in his heart,
Who did not carry on merrily and joyfully
Since they had survived such mischance.
Moreover all the common people
In the country held a great celebration.
They disembarked from their galleys
And took shelter within their dwellings.
Quite happily they disarmed themselves.
Shortly thereafter the foreign knights,
In whom the king had found great haughtiness,
Departed for one place or another;
In a short time, every man among them sailed away.
There were six whose names
I'll be relating without a lie.
Each man was accompanied by his retinue.
These are their names, I'm sure of it.
But before they departed
And left behind the city of Limassol,
The king rewarded them richly,
And quite generously gave them
Gold, silver, precious vessels, jewels,
Silk cloth, and new horses.
As best he could he paid each man
According to his rank.
He did the same with the others
Who were to remain in his country.

In Cyprus sojourned the king,
Who had not rested for some time.
There he could find no way
To harm and harass the Saracens.
He rested there a month.
One morning, at break of day,
He summoned one of his chamberlains,
A man loved by all, and by me too,
For he was a knight of great renown.
His name was Brémont de la Voulte.
And the king said to him: "Brémont, dear friend,
We sleep, and yet our enemies

ne dorment pas · mais toudis veillent
et de nous grever se traveillent
si ne devons mie dormir
ne nous a tel sejour tenir
quant einsi les veons veillier
eins devons toudis travillier
pour eaus porter honte et damage
car il tiennent nostre heritage
si vous diray que vous ferez
bien et bel vous ordonnerez
et si penrez .iiii. galees
bien garnies et bien armees
de quoy vous serez capitainne
ni ressongniez peril ne peinne
quenvoier vous vueil en surie
ce sont une gent endormie
si vueil que vous les resvilliez
et que tantost vous abilliez

Quant bremons oy la nouvelle
moult li fu agreable et belle
si len mercia humblement
et puis le dist secretement
a aucuns de ses compaingnons
et dist signeurs nous nous plaingnons
que trop sejournons longuement
je vous menray procheinnement
en tele place et en tel lieu
contre les anemis de dieu
que je ne say nen mer nen terre
si bon lieu pour honneur conquerre
car li bons roys le me commande
si couvient que chascuns entende
secretement a la besongne
sans querir jour · terme · ne alongne
quant il ot dit sa volente
il furent tuit entalente
de faire son commandement
et deirent apertement
sire alez ou quil vous plaira
car nuls de nous ne vous laira
les galees aparillies
furent · armees et garnies
si quau landemain se parti
mais il sera en tel parti
einsois quil soit prime de jour
quil not onques si grant paour
quen mer leva une tempeste
qui toute lesmuet et tempeste

Sleep not. Instead they are always vigilant
And work hard to do us harm.
So we should not sleep,
Nor enjoy such a sojourn.
Instead we should continue the struggle every day
When we see them taking no time for rest
And make an effort to shame and harm them,
For they still possess our heritage.
I'll tell you what to do.
Outfit yourself well and properly
And then take four galleys
That are well stocked and well armed,
And of these you will be the captain.
Give no thought to the peril or hardship
Because I intend sending you to Syria.
They are a people asleep,
So I want you to rouse them
And ready yourself at once for war."

When Brémont heard the news,
He thought it good and welcome
And so thanked the king humbly
And then shared it secretly
With some of his companions,
And said: "Lords, we've been bemoaning
Our idleness that lasts too long.
Soon I will lead you
Into a place and country
Against the enemies of God
Like no other I know on sea or land,
No destination better for the winning of honor.
For the good king commands this of me.
So it must be that every man attends
In secret to his task, not asking
The day, or how long, or how much delay."
When he had spoken what he wished,
They were all eager
To carry out his order
And said this openly:
"Sire, go where you please,
For none of us will desert you."
The galleys were readied,
Armed, and supplied,
So that they set out the next day.
But he will find himself in such circumstances,
Even before the first hour of day,
That he was never more afraid.
For a storm arose in the sea
That drove everything and raged on,

et quil ni ot voile ne mast
que la tempeste ne tumast
li vens fu gros la mer senfla cccxxxiiV
pour le vent qui trop fort souffla
si que les ondes ressambloient
monteingnes · si hautes estoient
et dessous sambloit uns abismes
bremons dist onques ne veismes
nulle tempeste si doubteuse
ne des cent pars si perilleuse
je croy que dieux est sarrazins
sil estoit leurs germains cousins
sest il assez de leur partie
veez comment il nous guerrie
bremons flotte par mi la mer
si li fait gringneur reclamer
que sa merci li faut atendre
autrement ne se puet deffendre
einsi fortune le demainne
en grant peril et en grant peinne
tant a flote tant a vogue
quil et sa gent se sont trouve
droit au lieu dont parti estoient
dont nostre signeur loer doient
bremons a ceste fois ne fit
grant damage ne grant profit
onques il ne pot terre prendre
en pais ou il voloit tendre
car fortune la ramene
maugre sien et contre son gre

Bremons ala devers le roy
et li conta le grant desroy
de la mer et de sa fortune
et comment chascuns et chascune
qui estoit en sa compaingnie
navoit esperence de vie
et comment par droite contrainte
la mer qui estoit trouble et tainte
par sa force et par son vent fort
maugre sien lavoit mis a port
li bons roys respondi bremont
se dieux me doint joie il a mont
que je ne finay de penser
comment la mer porries passer
et de vous forment me doubtoie
pour le fort temps que je veoie
vous soiez li tres bien venus
et a grant joie receus

And he had no mast or sail
This storm did not send crashing.
The wind was strong, the sea swelled up
Because of the gusts that blew so swiftly over it,
So that they waves became most like
Mountains, they were so high.
Beneath, it seemed a chasm opened up.
Brémont said: "Never have we seen
A storm this frightful,
Nor one hundredth this dangerous.
I believe God is a Saracen,
And if these people were His closest kin,
Would He take their side this much?
Look how He wars upon us."
Brémont is sailing on the sea,
And so a greater power makes him call to Him,
So that he must await His mercy.
Otherwise he cannot save himself.
And so Fortune leads him into
Much danger and great suffering.
He sailed so long, he floated so far
That he and his force found themselves
Right back in the place they had set out from,
And for this they should praise Our Lord.
At this time Brémont did not do
Great damage or find much success.
He could never come to land
In the country he wanted to head for,
For Fortune brought him back
Despite himself and against his will.

Brémont went to the king
And told him about the great storm
On the sea and his mischance,
Also how everyone, man and woman alike,
All those in his company,
Had no hope for their lives,
And how, truly compelled,
The sea, which had been troubled and roiled up,
Through its force and through its strong winds,
Despite his efforts, had brought him to port.
The good king answered: "Brémont,
So God grant me joy, I have for a long time
Been thinking about
How you could pass over the sea,
And I feared greatly for you
Because of the terrible storm I saw.
You are quite welcome here
And received with great joy,

car je croy de vostre retour
que dieux la fait pour le millour
ce fut droitement en tempoire
que len trueve la primevoire
le roys ne fist pas lonc detry
eins manda monsigneur monstri
qui de chypre est ses amiraus
chevaliers est preus et loyaus
et homme de tres bon affaire
si dist · amiraus je vueil faire
une armee priveement
dont vous serez ouvertement
maistre · capitainne et meneur
et ni ara grant ne meneur
qui noubeisse a vostre vueil
de .xxv. voiles la vueil
pour courir sus nos annemis
or ne soiez lens ne remis
mandes vos gens apertement
et il dist · sire liement
vostre commandement feray
si que demain tout prest seray
car nos naves et nos galees
sont garnies et aprestees
et pour ce a moy ne tenra pas
mais onques il nen passa pas
quen chypre demoura tout coy
et vezci la cause pour quoy

Quant li soudans sot la nouvelle
qualixandre sa cite belle
estoit einsi prise et gastee
il commanda sans demouree
que tous crestiens en sa terre
fussent pris · et quon les enserre
et quil soient emprisonne cccxxxiiiR
mal traitie et fort rensonne
et on fist son commandement
et encor plus · car mortelment
li sarrazin si les haioient
et en tous lieus les despitoient
la avoit il veniciens
et pluseurs autres crestiens
qui furent pris et enserre
feru · batu · et aterre
des sarrazins villeinnement
et traitie moult honteusement
non contrestant la marchandise
qui avoit la moult grant franchise

For I think this about your return
—That God did it for the best."
This was right at the time
Spring does arrive.
The king did not hesitate for long,
But sent for my lord Monstry,
Who was his admiral in Cyprus;
He is a knight brave and loyal,
And a man who can be trusted.
And he said to him: "Admiral, I intend
In secret to raise an army
Whose master in public
You will be, captain and leader.
And there will be no man, great or small,
Who will not obey your will.
I wish it to be twenty-five sails
In order to assault our enemies.
Now don't be slow or remiss.
Assemble your troops at once."
And he said to him: "Sire, I will obey
Your command gladly
And so be ready on the morrow
Because our ships and galleys
Are prepared and well supplied
And will not hold back on my account."
But he never made the journey,
For he stayed at rest instead in Cyprus.
And here is the reason why.

When the sultan learned the news
That Alexandria, his beautiful city,
Had been taken and laid waste in this way,
He gave the order, not delaying,
That all Christians in his lands
Should be seized and put in chains
So they might be imprisoned,
Ill treated, and then ransomed for a high price.
And this order was carried out,
And even more done because the Saracens
Bore them a mortal hatred
And everywhere thought badly of them.
In that land there were Venetians
And many other Christians
Who were taken and tied up,
Beaten, struck, and battered
Quite vilely by the Saracens,
And they were treated very shamefully
Despite the fact that merchants
In that country had many powerful rights.

le duc et la gent de venise
quant il oirent ceste prise
tantost ordonnerent messages
tous preudommes hardis et sages
et au soudant les envoierent
mais einsois bien les enfourmerent
de tout ce quil devoient faire
tant firent quil vinrent au quaire
sans avoir nul empeschement
il avoient .i. druguement
qui abreja si leur proces
qau soudan heurent acces
et quil feirent leur requeste
par voie soutive et honneste
leur requeste ne contenoit
fors les crestiens quon tenoit
peussent avoir delivrance
et avec ce que lordenance
dou soudan et deaus acordee
entre marcheans fust gardee
cestoit la fin ou il tendoient
autre chose ne demandoient

Quant il heurent dit leur plaisir
longuement et a bon loisir
li soudans pas ne respondi
car juenesse li deffendi
et innocence li deffent
pour ce qui cestoit .i. enfant
qui navoit pas .xv. ans passez
mais il avoit conseil assez
qui respondi moult sagement
et dist einsi premierement
vous requerez quon laisse vivre
vos crestiens et quon les delivre
et que leur franchise perdue
ne soit pas eins leur soit tenue
vous nous requeres courtoisie
et si nous faites villonnie
nest pas chose qui se puist joindre
quant vous nous volez poindre et oindre
nous ferons ce que vous ferez
nautre chose nen porterez
et se vous nous estes courtois
nous serons de la gent dartois
vous nous poez assez entendre
la noble cite dalixandre
qui na pareille ne seconde
ne milleur en trestout le monde

The doge and the people of Venice,
When they heard of these events,
At once ordered messengers,
All of them warriors brave and wise,
And they sent them to the Saracens.
But before this they instructed
Them about all they were to accomplish.
The ambassadors proceeded until reaching Cairo,
Without finding any obstacles.
They had an interpreter
Who so eased their task
That they gained access to the sultan,
And they made their request
With finesse and frankness.
All they asked was
That the Christians being held
Should have their freedom,
And, in addition, that the agreement
Made between them and the sultan
In respect to merchants should be upheld.
This was the end they were seeking;
They demanded nothing further.

When they had said all they pleased,
At length and without hurrying,
The sultan uttered nothing in return,
For youth prevented him,
And innocence did too
Since he was then only a boy
Who had not reached his fifteenth birthday.
Yet he was adequately advised
By a man who answered quite wisely,
Who said these things first:
"You ask that your Christian people
Be allowed to live and be freed,
And that their franchise should not
Be revoked but upheld.
You demand courtesy from us
And against us do villainous things.
There is no matter that can be negotiated
While you intend attacking and harming us.
We'll do exactly as you do,
So take back nothing but that.
And if you are courteous to us,
We will be as kind as the people of Artois.
You can understand why readily enough.
The noble city of Alexandria,
Which has no peer, no rival
Nor is there any better in all the world

toute est mise a destruction
nonques si grant occision
ne fu des le temps de pompee
quant cesar a sa bonne espee
li tolli joie honneur et gloire
et lenchassa cest chose voire
de thessale et mist en essil
mais ains en mourut .v^{c}. mil
vostres roy de chypre la fait
dont vraiement trop a meffait
et fait au soudan grant injure
docire toute creature
quil et sa gent tenir pooient
et qui rien ne leur demandoient
se vous venez pour lamender
nous ne volons plus demander
et se vos roys le nous amende
nous seron courtois de lamende
son le fait vos amis serons cccxxxiiiV
et ce non nous lamenderons
car se lun ou lautre nest fait
tant sera plus grant le meffait
si que seigneurs vous en irez
et a vostre roy le direz
de mot en mot de chief en chief
et se vous disons de rechief
que vo crestien seront en cage
et en perpetuel servage
sans mais partir son nen fait tant
que le soudan en soit contant
ses mos oys congie preirent
et landemain se departirent

Au retour sont li messagier
qui ne finerent de nagier
tant qua nimesson sont venu
terre ont pris si sont descendu
et monterent haut ou palais
de la ville qui nest pas lais
quant li bons roys sceut leur venue
moult en desire la vehue
pour lamour de ceaus de venise
quil aimme de bon cuer et prise
quant il furent en sa presence
grant honneur et grant reverence
leur fist li roy · et vraiement
moult se contindrent humblement
et de chief en chief li conterent
comment vers le soudan alerent

—Has been completely destroyed.
There's been no greater massacre
Since the time of Pompey,
When Caesar, with his trusty sword,
Bereft him of joy, honor, and glory.
He chased him—and this is the truth
—From Thessaly and forced him into exile,
But before this a half million lay dead.
Your king of Cyprus did this
And thereby did a great wrong
And has injured the sultan severely
By killing every person
Whom he and his men could get hold of,
And yet they asked nothing of them.
If you have come to right this wrong,
We would ask nothing more.
And if your king compensates us for this,
We will be courteous in making amends.
If this is done, we will be your friends.
And if not, we'll take our compensation.
But if neither of these things comes to pass,
The misdeed will be greater.
And so, my lords, you will go
And tell your king, word for word,
All this, from beginning to end.
And, to repeat, we are saying
That your Christians will remain captives
In an unending state of servitude
Without ever departing if enough is not done
To satisfy the sultan in this matter."
Hearing these words, they took their leave
And departed the very next day.

The messengers made their way back,
Who did not halt on their voyage
Until they arrived at Limassol.
They struck land, then disembarked
And made the climb to the palace
In the town, which is hardly an ugly place.
When the good king learned of their arrival,
He was quite eager to see them
Because of his affection for the Venetians,
Whom he loved and esteemed from the heart.
When they were in his presence,
The king paid them great honor
And reverence; and they truly conducted
Themselves in all humility
And related to him from beginning to end
How they had traveled to the sultan,

et les requestes quil ont fait
et sa response · et que de fait
avoit tous les crestiens pris
qui estoient en son pourpris
cest a dire en sa signourie
et sont en peril de leur vie
car tous a un cop les fist prendre
apres la prise dalixandre
li roys dist quil sen vengeroit
et quen surie envoieroit
car les naves et les galees
sont au port toutes aprestees
quant li messager lentendirent
moult humblement li requeirent
quil vosist laissier ceste armee
et quelle fust contremandee
car leur gent qui sont arreste
seroient mort et tempeste
des sarassins sans nul respit
son leur faisoit aucun despit
et encor il li affermoient
et en verite quil tenoient
daucunes des gens dou soudan
quil ne li querroit de cest an
chose quil peust bonnement
quil ne le feist liement
et quant li bons roys les oy
en son cuer moult se resjoy
si fist son amiral mander
pour tout faire contremander
ce fist li roys a leur priere
car damour certeinne et entiere
le commun de venise amoit
et ses bons amis les clamoit

On avoit adont raporte
au gentil roy pour verite
que li sarrazin de turquie
qui sont gent aperte et hardie
avoient pluseurs galiotes
ce sont galees petiotes
pour aler le soudan servir
il fist son amiraut venir
et li dist fait avons grant mise
en larmee qui est sus mise
si seroit grant descouvenue
selle estoit gastee et perdue
pour certein avons oy dire
que li turquoys ont grant navire

The requests they had made
As well as his response; and that in fact
He had imprisoned all the Christians
Who were in his territories,
That is, in the lands under his control,
And they are in peril of their lives
Because he at once imprisoned all of them
After the taking of Alexandria.
The king said he would have his vengeance
And send an expedition to Syria;
For the ships and galleys
Were then all ready at the port.
When the messengers heard this,
They quite humbly asked him
If he would abandon this armed expedition
And disband the assembled force
Because their people who had been arrested
Would be tortured and killed
By the Saracens with no mercy shown
Should any injury be done them.
Moreover, they affirmed to him,
And in truth, that if they were holding
Some of the sultan's people,
This man was not seeking from him this year
Something he could not readily do,
That he could not do happily.
And when the good king heard them,
He rejoiced greatly at heart.
So he had his admiral order
That everything be halted.
He did so at their request,
For with a love certain and unbroken
He admired the commune of Venice,
Whose citizens he called his good friends.

Meanwhile it had been reported
As a fact to the noble king
That the Saracens of Turkey,
Who are a brave and courageous race,
Had several galiots,
That is, small galleys
Used for travel in the sultan's service.
He had his admiral come,
And he told him: "We've taken much trouble
In assembling the force here below.
So it would be a great shame
Were it wasted and not used.
We have heard tell for certain
That the Turks have a great fleet

pour aler devers babyloinne
montez en mer et sans essoine
prenez gens hardis et seurs cccxxxiiiiR
et vous en alez sus les turs
se leurs galiotes trouvez
gardez que si bien vous prouvez
que riens a ardoir ni demeure
se vitement leur courez seure
il seront tantost desconfis
et mis a mort jen sui tous fis
li amiraus natendi point
eins mist ses besongnes a point
en mer monta dieux le conduie
et a joie le raconduie
mais les galiotes trouva
et la telement se prouva
quil les ardi toutes en poudre
si que li vens la terre en poudre
et tous ceuls qui dedens estoient
furent mort sil ne sen fuioient

Et pour ce que les juenes gens
qui deuls armer sont diligens
si tost quil ont la teste armee
chascuns cuide valoir pompee
et font plus quon ne leur commande
sil ne sont tres bien en commande
- -
- -
pres de la avoit .i. chastel
quon tenoit pour fort et pour bel
ses noms ne doit estre celez
candelor estoit appellez
li amiraus qui estoit la
a tous ses compaingnons parla
et dist seigneurs la dieu mercy
venus somes doutre mer cy
nostres sires nous a conduit
et donne son seur conduit
si croy quades nous conduira
puis qua li servir nous duira
alons en droit a candelour
pour conquerre pris et honnour
alons · car je tien fermement
que nous larons legierement
sans plus plaidier ont retournes
et leurs visages et leurs nes
tant nagierent et tant feirent
que pres de candelor venirent

To travel to Babylon.
Take to the sea, and, without a fuss,
Bring with you brave and trusty men;
Make your way toward the Turks.
If you come upon their galiots,
Conduct yourself so well you make sure
Nothing of them remains to burn
If you fall upon their ships quickly.
They will be wiped out at once
And destroyed—of this I'm completely certain."
The admiral did not hesitate,
But accomplished this task ably.
He set out on the sea. May God
Guide him and convey him to joy!
Soon he found the galiots
And so proved his worthiness
That he burned them all to ashes,
With which the wind powdered the land.
And all those who were within
Were put to death if they did not flee.

And because the young men
Among them were eager for a fight,
As soon as they put on their helmets
(Each and every one thought to emulate Pompey
And did more than they had been ordered to do
And thus were not well disciplined)
- -
- -
Near that spot was a fortified place
That was considered strong and desirable.
Its name should not be passed over in silence:
Candelore it was called.
The admiral who was there
Spoke to all his companions
And said: "Lords, thanks be to God!
We have passed over the ocean to this spot.
Our Lord has guided us
And has given us His safe conduct.
So I believe He will guide us further
Since He instructs us to serve Him.
Let's make straight for Candelore
To win both praise and honor.
Let's go, for I believe very firmly
That we can take it with ease."
With no more speechmaking they turned
Their faces and ships in that direction.
They proceeded and sailed
Until they did approach Candelore.

a la terre sont descendu
na riens qui soit nont entendu
fors a candelor assaillir
car il ni cuident pas faillir
la barbacanne ont de prinsaut
gaaingnie · et dou premier assaut
et puis le chastel assaillirent
mais vraiement il y faillirent
car fors fu et bien deffendus
si ne fu ne pris ne rendus
eins disoient en leur deffense
moult remaint de ce que fols pense
si que de lassaut se partirent
et en leurs nes se retreirent
et sans perdre sont retournez
au lieu dont il furent tournez
et quant li gentis roys le sot
il ne fist mie comme sot
eins loa dieu devotement
et sa douce mere ensement
et fist faire processions
veus promesses · oblations
a la gloire de dieu toudis
et de la court de paradis

Larmee est au port demouree
toute preste et toute ordenee
pour partir quant li roys vorra
et quant son milleur point verra
et li messagier la estoient
qui aveques le roy traitoient
de par leur commun de venise
et de par le soudan · que prise
fust · une journee dacort
car riens ni valoit le descort
et que li soudans le desire
plus assez quil ne vuelent dire

Li roys leur respondi briefment
signeurs je say certeinnement
que vous desirez bonne pais cccxxiiiiV
et en verite je si fais
sauf monneur et mon heritage
mais trop seroit chose sauvage
de traitier a vous · qui navez
point de pooir · bien le savez
et sans doubte se je veoie
gens de par lui je traiteroie

They disembarked on the land
And attended to nothing whatever
Save assaulting the city of Candelore,
For they thought they could not fail.
In their rushing charge they took
The barbican, in their first assault,
And afterward they attacked the citadel.
But there truly they failed
Because it was strong and well defended,
So it was neither taken nor surrendered.
Rather the defenders shouted out:
"Much of what a fool thinks comes to nothing."
And so they broke off the assault
And retreated to their ships.
And without any losses they returned
To the place from which they had set out.
And when the noble king learned of this,
He did not behave like a fool;
Instead he praised God devoutly
And His sweet mother as well.
And he ordered processions,
Vows, promises, oblations
Every day to the glory of God
And his court in paradise.

The army remained in the port,
All in readiness and well supplied
To depart whenever the king wished,
Whenever he saw the most opportune moment.
And there were the messengers
Who negotiated with the king
On behalf of the commune of Venice
And for the sultan: that a day
Of armistice should be arranged,
For the hostilities profited not at all;
And that the sultan wished peace
Even more than they were willing to say.

The king answered them at once:
"Lords, I know for certain
That you desire the right kind of peace,
As truly I do the same,
Saving my honor and my heritage.
But it would be very much out of order
To treat with men such as yourselves who possess
No power at all—and well you know it.
Without a doubt, if I see men
Who act on his behalf, I'll negotiate.

et mieus vorroie par amour
avoir le mien que par rigour
je ne voy ci autre traitie
ne de guerre ne damitie
quant li messagier lentendirent
il senclinerent et preirent
congie dou roy · puis sen tournerent
vers le soudan · et li conterent
sagement et par bel arroy
toute lentention dou roy

Li soudans en ot moult grant joie
se leur dist seigneurs je vorroie
que oubliez fussent tous meffais
et quaucuns bons traities fust fais
ou bons acors · cest mes consaus
adont manda .ii. amiraus
les plus notables de sa court
si leur dist signeurs brief et court
il couvient quen chypre en alez
trente sarrazins appellez
tels com vous les vorrez eslire
des plus sages de mon empire
que vous en menres avec vous
et serez souvereins de tous
au roy direz que mon desir
est davoir pais que moult desir
traitiez le mieus que vous porrez
selonc ce que de li orrez
avoir et pooir leur donna
et le seurplus bien ordonna
son conseil qui bien le sceut faire
atant se partirent dou quaire
tant ont erre par leurs journees
en terre · en mer et en galees
quil sont a nimesson venu
encor ne lor est avenu
empeschement ne destourbier
et aussi tuit li messagier
de venise avec eaus estoient
sans partir · et les conduisoient

Les .ii. amiraus descendirent
des galees · puis se vestirent
et saournerent richement
et tuit li autre gentement
de dras de soie se parerent
et puis haut eu palais monterent

I'd prefer to get back what is mine
In an amicable way than with force.
I see no other negotiation here,
Neither for friendship nor for war."
When the messengers heard him,
They bowed and took
Leave from the king, setting out afterward
For the sultan, whom they informed
Wisely and in the proper fashion
About all the king intended.

The sultan rejoiced greatly at the news
And so said to them: "Lords, I would like
All our difficulties to be forgotten
And for a good treaty or firm accord
To be drawn up—that's my undertaking."
At once he sent for two admirals,
The most notable men of his court.
So he said to them: "Lords, short and brief,
You must travel to Cyprus.
Summon thirty Saracens,
The ones you would choose
From among the wisest in my empire,
Whom you will take along with you,
And you will be in charge of all.
Say to the king that my desire
Is to have peace, which I very much want.
Negotiate as best you can
According to what you hear him say."
Goods and powers he bestowed upon them
And even more. He carefully crafted
His instructions—and this he could ably do.
Soon they left Cairo.
In their journey they traveled far enough
On land, over water, and in ships
Until they arrived at Limassol.
They encountered, moreover,
No trouble or impediment;
And neither did all the messengers
From Venice who were with them
And without departing served as guides.

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The two admirals disembarked
From their galleys and then richly
Adorned and attired themselves,
As did all the others in a noble fashion.
Silk clothes they put on
And then made their way up to the palace.

li roys leur fist moult bonne chiere
la parlerent de la matiere
pour quoy li soudans les envoie
moult longuement · que vous diroie
longuement ont parlemente
chascuns disoit sa volente
finablement li roys leur dit
seigneurs entendez a mon dit
li soudans tient mon heritage
de tous crestiens prent truage
nest homs qui en son pais voise
qui ne vive en peinne et en noise
toute marchandise est perdue
a crestien ni ha foy tenue
il a pris les veniciens
et tous les autres crestiens
qui estoient en son pais
dont forment sommes esbahis
nest crestien tant ait vasselage
sil va en saint pelerinage
dou sepulchre · quil ne renconne
ou occie · sil ne li donne
dont li vient ceste auctorite
quil nous tient en si grant vilte
doit il avoir seur nous maistrie cccxxxvR
avantage ne signourie
en tous cas nostre foy despite
eu monde na si bon hermite
qui ne se deust mieus offrir
a mort · que tel chose souffrir
a tous crestiens fait injure
contre dieu · et contre droiture
li mundes doit estre communs
et li soudans en fait comme uns
sires · qui trop fierement regne
cuide il quil ne soit que son regne
faites ces choses reparer
car li pueples pas comparer
ne doit par droit sa convoitise
qui maint cuer esprent et atise
car le pueples assez a faire ha
einsi li roys leur declaira
et dist toute sentencion
clerement et sans fiction
et si leur fist pluseurs demandes
moiennes · petites · et grandes
que je nay pas encor escript
car trop lonc en seroit lescript

The king welcomed them cordially.
There they related at some length
The reason why the sultan
Had dispatched them. What should I tell you?
A long time they held discussion.
Each man spoke what he would.
In the end the king said to them:
"Lords, listen to what I say.
The sultan occupies my heritage.
From all Christians he exacts tribute.
No man who travels through his lands
Does not live on in pain and torment.
All trade has been lost.
No bargain is kept with a Christian.
He has seized the Venetians
Along with all the other Christians
Who were in his lands,
By which we are greatly disturbed.
There's no Christian, no matter his rank,
Who, making the holy pilgrimage
To the Sepulchre, is not held for ransom
Or killed if the man does not pay it.
Whence comes this authority
To treat us with such villainy?
Should he hold sway over us,
Power or lordship?
In every way he dishonors our faith.
And in the world there's no hermit
So virtuous who should not let himself
Be killed instead of enduring such a thing.
He does injury to all Christians
Against the right and against God.
The world should be for all,
And the sultan acts as its single
Lord, who rules too arrogantly.
Does he not think only his reign exists?
Amend these wrongs,
For the people by right
Ought not pay for his greediness,
Which entices and inflames many a heart,
Since the people have enough to bear."
The king declaimed and revealed
In this way all his understanding
Clearly and with nothing invented
And made a number of demands,
Big, small, in between,
Which I have not yet written down,
For the text would be too long.

Quant il ot fine sa parole
clerement et sans parabole
li messagier ont respondu
sire bien avons entendu
ce quil vous a pleut a dire
ou riens ne volons contredire
car bien et bel et sagement
avez parle · et clerement
mais nous navons mie puissance
de parfaire aucune ordenance
de leritage et dou treu
dont a parler vous a pleu
si que sire nous vous prions
tres humblement et supplions
que vous prenes aucuns des vostres
que nous menrons avec les nostres
seurement jusques au quaire
et quil soient de tel affaire
quil sachent moustrer vostre entente
et la passee et la presente
au soudan · et nous esperons
que si courtois le trouverons
que nous cherrons en bon acort
li roy respondi je lacort
courtoisement leur ottria
et puis moult bien les festia
et fist jouster en leur presence
ses chevaliers mains cops de lance
li sarrazin se mervilloient
comment il ne sentretuoient
car il sont dou gieu desapris
pour ce quil ne lont pas apris

Li gentis roys qui riens noublie
avoit en sa chancellerie
un tres bon clerc · maistre en decrez
qui estoit sages et discrez
il le manda si li commande
quil escoute bien et entende
il li dist · aler vous couvient
par devers le soudan qui tient
nostre heritage et nostre terre
et pour ce avons nous a lui guerre
de tous crestiens prent truage
et pluseurs tient en grant servage
si ferez une instruction
de toute nostre entencion
le quele nous deviserons
mot a mot et y metterons

When he had finished his speech,
In a clear fashion and without obscurity,
The messengers answered:
"Sire, we have heard well
What you have pleased to say,
In which there's nothing we'd contradict,
For you have spoken well,
Ably, wisely, and with clarity.
Yet we have no power at all
To complete any agreement
About the heritage and the compact
Of which it has pleased you to speak.
And so, sire, we beg you
Quite humbly, and plead
That you choose some of your own people,
Whom we will take along with our own
In safety to the city of Cairo.
And let them be the kind of men
Who are skilled enough to discuss your will
And the past and the present
With the sultan, and we expect
You will find him so accommodating
That we fall into an excellent understanding."
The king answered: "I agree."
He treated the men with courtesy,
And afterwards feasted them quite sumptuously.
Then in their presence he arranged
For his knights to joust with many a lance blow.
The Saracens marveled
How they did not kill each other,
But they were ignorant of the sport
Because they had never learned it.

The noble king, who forgot nothing,
Had among those in his chancellery
A very able clerk, a master of laws,
A man both wise and discreet.
The king summoned, commanded him
To listen well and attend.
He said to him: "You must go
To the sultan, who holds sway over
Our heritage and our lands.
And for this reason we wage war against him.
He exacts tribute from all Christians
And keeps a number in bitter slavery.
So you will deliver instructions
About all our intentions,
The which we will devise
Word by word and include therein

tout ce que vous devez querir
et en nostre nom requerir
par quoy vous en soiez certains
mais ne dites ne plus ne mains
en nostre nom · ne de par nous
seur peinne de nostre courrous
vous estes sages et legiers
si yrez avec ces messagiers
qui droit au soudan vous menront cccxxxvV
seurement et ramenront
li clers fist son commandement
volentiers et diligemment
et moult liez fu de ceste alee
pour vir le quaire et la contree

Et quant linstruction fu faite
li roys qui ne pense ne gaite
fors a ses annemis destruire
fist becuit et vitaille cuire
sen fist leurs galee garnir
largement · jusquau revenir
li sarrazin es nes monterent
et le clerc avec eaus menerent
tant ont vogue tant ont erre
par mer et par chemin ferre
o le clerc qui a nom anthoinne
quil sont venus en babiloinne
ou li soudans les atendoit
quant il les sot pour eaus mandoit
si que le clerc a li menerent
dou bon roy · et moult lonnourerent
li clers li fist la reverence
et li soudans selonc senfance
le recut gracieusement
la parlerent moult longuement
dou roy de chypre et de ses fais
comment il est bons et parfais
quant il orent assez ruse
li clercs li a tout expose
lentention de son signour
si bien si bel · si a sonnour
et en tous cas si proprement
quon ne porroit mieux nullement

Quant li ot sa legation
dit et fait sa conclusion
li soudans fort merecolie
et ses consauls dautre partie
ad ce que li roys leur demande

All you are to seek from him
And require in our name
So that you may be certain.
But say no more, no less
In our name, nor for our part
On the pain of our anger.
You are wise and quick,
So go along with these messengers,
Who will lead you straight to the sultan
In safety and then bring you back."
The clerk obeyed his command
Willingly and diligently,
And he was quite happy about going
To see Cairo and the countryside.

And when his instructions had been delivered,
The king, who gave thought, attended only
To the destruction of his enemies,
Called for biscuit and food to be made ready.
In this way he supplied their ship
Generously, until their return.
The Saracens embarked on their vessels
And took the clerk along with them.
They sailed so far over the sea
And traveled so far on the paved roads
With the clerk, Anthony by name,
That they arrived at Babylon,
Where the sultan awaited them.
When he learned of them, he sent for them
So that they would bring the clerk of the good king
To him, and they paid the man great honor.
The clerk reverenced him,
And the sultan in his youthful way
Received him graciously.
They spoke together there a long time
About the King of Cyprus and his affairs,
How he was virtuous and excellent.
When they'd discussed enough,
The clerk explained to him
All his lord's intentions
So well, so ably, so much to his honor,
And in every way so properly,
That it could not have been better done.

After he had explained
His charge and made an end,
The sultan was quite discouraged,
As were his counselors for their part,
About what the king was asking of them.

mais trop est longue de sa demande
car pour parler ne pour rouver
ne pot li clers acort trouver
eins se departi sans acort
et sen revint tout droit au port
de nimesson · ou il trouva
le roy · qui encor se leva
car il estoit assez matin
li clers li dist en son latin
tout ce quil a trouve de fait
et que briefment il na riens fait
et quil ne trueve acort ne voie
de pais · dont parler vueille ou doie
quant fait ot sa relation
au roy bailla linstruction
et dist quil ne la perde point
quencor porra venir a point
li gentils roys prist a sousrire
quant il loy · et dist biau sire
encor venra tele saison
quil nous fera toute raison
sil plaist a dieu mon creatour
en qui sont trestuit mi retour
et en qui jay fiance pleinne
ou je seray mors en la peinne
tantost fist son conseil mander
pour savoir et pour demander
comment il se doit maintenir
puis quil ne puet a pais venir
si que longuement consilla
et trouve en son conseil ha
quil face une tres grosse armee
et quil mande par la contree
ses subges et ses bons amis
pour destruire ses anemis

Larmee ordena li bons roys
de .c. voiles et .xxiii.
et quant elle fu toute preste
il ot si grant mal en sa teste
que par tout le corps se doloit
et ainsi com partir voloit
li prist une grant maladie cccxxviR
que si le constreint et maistrie
que tout son fait fu depecie
a ceste fois et empeschie
moult fu malades longuement
li gentis roys · et tellement
que li temps diver seur lui vint

For too extensive was what he demanded.
But the clerk was not able, no matter
What he said or asked, to reach an agreement,
Without a treaty he departed instead
And returned straightaway to the port
Of Limassol, where he found
The king, who was already awake
Since it was then morning.
In his own language, the clerk reported to him
All he had discovered in fact;
And that he had, to be brief, accomplished nothing;
And that he found no common ground or path
Toward peace that he should or would speak of.
After he had told his tale,
He handed over the instructions
And said he should not lose them
Because he could still succeed in his aims.
The noble king began to smile
When he heard him and said: "Good sir,
A time will come when that man
Will do all that's just for us,
Should it please God, my Creator,
In Whom all my hope rests
And in Whom I have great faith
—Or I will die in the struggle."
At once he had his council summoned
In order to ask and discover
What course he should pursue
Now that he could not make peace.
So a long discussion was held,
And the king was advised by this council
To raise a huge army,
Send the word out through the country
To his subjects and close allies
So that his enemies might be destroyed.

The good king assembled a force
Of one hundred and twenty-three sails.
And when it was fully prepared,
He had such pain in his head
That his entire body was badly affected.
And thus, even as he intended to set out,
A great sickness seized him,
So controlled and mastered him
That all his plans were then
Ruined and disrupted.
The king lay gravely ill
A long time, and it happened
That the winter season came upon him,

si que sejourner le couvint
mais dieux qui de ses amis pense
fist quil fu en convalescence
et si tost quil se pot armer
apparillier fist seur la mer
tres grant navige et mervilleus
et sestoit li temps perilleus
et trop plus quautre fois divers
pour ce quil estoit grans yvers
quant il ot fait son appareil
tel quonques ne fist le pareil
fors a la prise dalixandre
li gentil roys sans plus atendre
qui mort ne peril ne doubta
dedens sa galee monta
et toute sa gent avec li
mais homme ni avoit que li
qui sceust rien de sa pensee
ne quel part seroit son alee
et quant il fu bien eslongiez
grant paour ot destre plungiez
quen la mer qui est noire et brune
leva une si grant fortune
quonques homs si grande ne vit
or oiez comme il se chevit
li roys fu .v. jours et .v. nuis
en tel peril en tels anuis
quonques il ne pot aprochier
terre ne greve · ne rochier
de ses anemis nullement
et si tres perilleusement
estoit jour et nuit sans cesser
que homme nel porroit penser
car par la grant force dou vent
li gentils roys cuidoit souvent
que sa galee fust plungie
et aussi toute sa maisnie
et quant en son pais revint
li bons roy si foibles devint
pour ce quil ne pooit mengier
et savoit souffert le dangier
de la mer · et sa maladie
nestoit pas encor bien garie
parfaitement · que sans mentir
il ne se pooit soustenir
si demoura dedens sa chambre
presques tout le mois de novembre
tant quil fu de tous poins garis
et ses maus cures et taris

So he was forced to stay at home.
But God, who thinks of his friends,
Brought about a convalescence for him,
And soon enough so he could take to arms;
He assembled a very great fleet,
One quite impressive, to cross the sea.
And the season was threatening,
Much more unreliable than before
Because it was fully winter.
When he had assembled his force,
Like none he had put together before
Except at the taking of Alexandria,
The noble king, delaying no further,
Who feared neither death nor peril,
Embarked on his galley
Along with all his companions.
But no man was there present save him
Who knew anything of his intentions,
Or where his path might go;
And when they had gone some distance,
He greatly feared being drowned
Because over the waters black and dark
Arose a tempest so severe
That no man had ever seen the like.
Now hear what he experienced.
Five full days and nights the king
Was in great distress and danger
Because he was never able to approach
The land, the beach, the rocks
Of his enemies in any way.
And it was so threatening
Day and night, with no respite,
That no man could imagine it,
But by the great force of the wind,
The noble king often thought
His ship would be sunk
And all his company with it.
And when he returned to his own country,
The good king grew quite weak
Because he could not eat
And had suffered through the danger
On the seas, and his illness
Had not yet healed
Completely, and so—this is no lie
—He could not go on.
So he remained inside his chambers
Almost the whole month of November
Until at last he was completely well,
And his ills were cured and healed.

si ne metoit mie sententе
en chiens noisiaus · nen dame gente
fors en ses anemis grever
la vuet il mettre et esprouver
cuer· corps · vigour vie · et puissance
son tans · et toute sa chevance
on vit bien sa grant volente
car si tost comme il ot sante
larmee qui estoit deffaite
fu dedens .xv. jours refaite
mieux et plus efforciement
que devant · si ne say comment
li soudans en oy nouvelle
un sien amiraut en appelle
qui moult estoit de li privez
et li a dit vous ne savez
li roy de chypre vuet venir
seur nous · plus ne sen puet tenir
toute sa gent a mis ensamble
et nostre gent devant li tramble
et fuit · certes il nous nuira
tant sil puet quil nous destruira
ottroions li ce quil demande
si que jamais ne nous offende
car cils ne vit pas qui na pais cccxxxviV
nous navons cure de ces plais
de ces guerres · de ces riotes
lautrier ardi les galiotes
de turquie · et dalixandre
mist · les maistres portes en cendre
et tua bien trois cens mil hommes
vraiement en grant peril sommes
et en doubte de perdre terre
se longuement dure la guerre

Li amiraus li acorda
tout ce quil dist et recorda
tantost li consaus fu mandez
li soudans dist or mentendez
signeurs jai grant fiance en vous
car vous estes mes hommes tous
toute ce quavoit dit leur compta
et chascuns moult bien le nota
et dit chascuns que par sa loy
bon est denvoier vers le roy
il avoit la .ii. amiraus
quil tenoit pour bons et loiaus
lun le plus grant de son hoste
et lautre y avoit ja este

So he did not direct his mind
Toward dogs, or birds, or pretty women
—Only toward harassing his enemies.
To this purpose he devoted and dedicated
His heart, body, vigor, life, and powers,
All his time, and all his possessions too.
His great determination was quite apparent.
For as soon as he was healthy,
The army, which was disbanded,
Was reassembled within fifteen days,
Better ordered and much mightier
Than before, how I do not know.
The sultan heard this news
And summoned one of his admirals,
A man quite intimate with him,
And said to him: "This you do not know.
The king of Cyprus plans
To attack us; he can hold back no longer.
He has assembled all his forces,
And before him our own tremble
And flee. If he can, surely the king will do us
Such great harm that we will be destroyed.
Let us grant him what he demands
So that he never attacks us,
For the man who lacks peace has no life!
We have no respite from these wounds,
From these wars, from these raids.
Just the other day he burned the galiots
From Turkey, and he's the one who reduced
The huge gates of Alexandria to cinders
And killed fully three hundred thousand people.
Truly we are in great danger
And at risk of losing our territory
If this war lasts a long time."

The admiral agreed to all
He said and affirmed.
As soon as a council was called,
The sultan said: "Hear me now.
Lords, I place great trust in you
Because you are all my men."
He then related to them all he had said,
And every man attended well.
And each man said that upon his law
It would be good to send the king an embassy.
There present were two admirals
Whom he considered virtuous and loyal,
One was the greatest in his retinue
And the other had been there.

et si fist mander .i. cadis
moult sage homme en fais et en dis
cadis · cest .i. clerc en leur loy
autrement appeller ne loy
si leur fist procuration
a grant deliberation
selonc sa loy · pour ottrier
pour jurer · pour ratefier
et pour promettre quil feroit
tout ce que acorde seroit
si quen chypre les envoia
moult leur dist et moult leur pria
quen toutes manieres sacordent
car sil font pais pas ne se tordent
li amiral ont pris congie
qui nont pas dormi ne songie
einsois faut que chascuns entende
ad ce que leurs sires commande
quarante sarrasins ont pris
honnourables et bien apris
si quavec eaus les ont mene
quant il furent bien ordene
le landemain se departirent
si tost comme le jour veirent

Sil est qui fait il est qui dist
li roys le sot · pour ce deffist
son armee · et desassambla
sa gent · qua grant peinne assambla
les .ii. amiraus nont fine
daler · eins ont tant chemine
quen chypre au port sont descendu
on ne lor a pas deffendu
car li roys les fist recevoir
et tres bien en fist son devoir
pour ce quil savoit grant partie
dou fait de la messagerie
et la puissance quil avoient
et pour quoy devers lui venoient
les amiraus devers le roy
alerent en moult riche arroy
quant il furent en sa presence
moult li firent grant reverence
et li roys tel chiere leur fist
qua chascun deaus tres bien souffist
il dirent leur legation
et dou soudan loppinion
et commencierent a traitier
li uns deaus dist que sans gaitier

And he had a cadis summoned,
A man quite wise in his words and deeds.
A cadis, that's a clerk in their religion;
I haven't heard them called anything else.
And he made them procurators
For this important deliberation
In accordance with their law so they might
Witness, swear, ratify, and promise
That he would fulfill
Everything that would be agreed.
So he dispatched these men to Cyprus,
Said much to them and exhorted them firmly
To draw up an agreement covering all issues,
For if they secured peace, they'd have no trouble.
The admirals have taken their leave,
Who have neither slept nor dreamt,
It being necessary for each instead
To undertake what their sire commanded.
Forty Saracens they selected,
Men honorable and well-educated
To make the journey along with them.
When they were all prepared,
They departed the next morning
As soon as day broke.

If someone acts, someone speaks.
The king learned the news. For this reason he
Disbanded his army, mustered out
The troops he'd assembled with great pains.
The two admirals never halted
Their journey until they traveled so far
They disembarked at the port in Cyprus.
No one then prevented this,
For the king had them greeted
And in this regard did ably what he should
Because he had learned a great part
Of the details of their embassy,
And the authority they possessed,
And why they were coming to him.
With much ceremony the admirals
Made their way to the king.
When they were in his presence,
They paid him great honor.
And the king in turn treated them
In a way that quite well satisfied them.
They reported their mission
And the views of the sultan,
And began the negotiations.
One declared that without any trickery

traitassent amiablement
pour pais avoir · et pleinnement
mout longuement parlementerent
et finablement sacorderent

Li amiraut ont acorde
ottroie · promis · et jure
comme procureur dou soudan
chascuns mist le doy a son dan
si comme leur guise le donne cccxxxviiR
quau soudan en propre personne
feront lacort ratifier
jurer · tenir · et ottrier
et li roys plus ne demandoit
car il a tout ce ou il tendoit
ou au mains la plus grant partie
et cest raisons que je vous die
que le traitie fu profitables
pour le roy et tres honnourables

Ce fait uns ermins dermenie
devant toute la compaingnie
vint au roy le traitie pendant
et li dist bons roys entendant
ne te feray nulle mensonge
et ce que diray nest pas songe
le grant caraman de turquie
qui est .i. turc que dieux maudie
a ton chastel de courc assis
tous ceuls quil trueve sont occis
bien a .xlv. mil turs
si quil ny a portes ne murs
dont on puist issir ne descendre
son ne vuet morir sans attendre
ta gent sont dedens assegie
si sui venus ci sans congie
tel mestier ont de ton secours
que mort sont se ne les secours

Quant li roys oy le message
on percut bien a son visage
et a la chiere quil faisoit
que li sieges li desplaisoit
tantost le prince en appella
.i. sien frere qui estoit la
et li dist frere vous irez
gardez que bien vous atirez
ci ne valent souspirs ne larmes
vous penrez .vi^{c}. hommes darmes

They would conduct the discussion in friendship
And disclose all so as to secure peace.
The parliament lasted a long time,
And in the end they came to an agreement.

The admirals allowed,
Granted, promised, and swore
As procurators for the sultan
(Each one put his finger to his teeth,
As their custom requires)
That in the presence of the sultan
They would see to ratifying the accord,
Swearing to, upholding, and promulgating it.
And the king asked for nothing else,
For he had got all he wanted,
Or at least the greater part.
And it is right that I tell you
The treaty was profitable
And very honorable for the king.

These things accomplished, an Armenian hermit
Approached the king—then holding the treaty
—In front of the assembled company
And told him: "Good king, listen to me.
I'll tell you no lies,
And what I say is no dream.
The Grand Caraman of Turkey
(Who is a Turk whom God may curse!)
Has laid siege to your castle at Gorhigos.
He has killed all those he came upon.
Well nigh forty-five thousand Turks are his.
And so in consequence there's no wall or gate
From which anyone might escape,
That is, unless he wishes a speedy death.
Your troops are besieged within.
And so I came here without permission.
Such need have they of your help
That they are dead unless you assist them."

When the king heard this message,
It was quite apparent in his face
And in the manner he affected
That the siege displeased him.
He summoned the prince at once,
One of his brothers who was present,
And said to him: "Brother, you will go.
Make your plans with care.
Sighs or tears will not avail you there.
You will take along six hundred knights,

qui seront de tres bonne estofe
ny a celui que je nestofe
si bien qui ni faudra laniere
tuit serez dessous ma baniere
partez vous demain sans demeure
car il couvient que je demeure
pour parfaire tout le traitie
que nous avons yci traitie
et se couvient que je delivre
ces .ii. amiraus a delivre

Si vous vueil dire et devisier
au mieus que je y saray viser
comment li chastiaus est assis
de courc · qui est grans et massis
de tours · de creniaus et de murs
qui sont haus fermes et seurs
courc siet eu pais dermenie
et sest assis par tel maistrie
que la mer li bat au gyron
et non mie tout environ
devant la porte a une place
qui tient .ii. archies despace
et puis une haute montaingne
qui est moult rote et moult grifaingne
et se ni a que trois entrees
qui sont rotes · et si po lees
qui ni puet monter nullement
cun homme ou .ii. tant seulement
jadis y ot une cite
qui fu de grant auctorite
mais elle est toute confundue
destruite a terre et abatue
et devant courc ha une yslette
ou jadis ot une villette
lysle est apellee colcos
et cest li lieus bien dire los
ou enciennement jason
conquist la doree toison

Or revenray a mon propos
li grans caramans et ses os
sus la montaingne estoit logiez
.ii. engins y avoit dreciez
qui toudis jour et nuit getoient cccxxxviiV
eu chastel · et tout le gastoient
il y avoit .i. capiteinne
qui .vi. fois en une semainne
envoia par devers le roy

Who will be of quite good mettle,
Not a one I did not choose myself
So ably that none will prove a coward.
Under my banner will you all be.
Leave tomorrow without delay,
For I must remain behind
To finish all the provisions
Of the treaty we have here agreed upon.
And so I must let these two admirals
Go their way as soon as possible."

And so I intend here to relate and describe,
As ably as I might imagine it,
How the castle at Gorhigos
Was laid out, which was a place huge and massive
With towers, embrasures, and walls,
And these last were high, strong, and secure.
Gorhigos is in the land of Armenia,
And it is strongly situated
In that the sea reaches to its lap,
But not all around.
Before the gate is an open field,
Twice the length of an arrow's flight.
Beyond that is a high mountain
That is very rough and wild.
And to the place are but three approaches,
Each uneven and so narrow
That men must walk singlefile
Or, at most, two abreast.
In that place was once a city
Of great importance.
But it has fallen into complete ruin,
Has been razed to the very ground and destroyed.
And before Gorhigos is a small island
Where formerly was a tiny village.
The island is named Colchis,
And it's the place, as I well dare say,
Where in ancient times Jason
Won the golden fleece.

Now I will return to my theme.
The Grand Caraman and his host
Were encamped on the mountain.
Two siege engines they deployed there,
And these hurled stones day and night
Into the castle and were destroying everything.
Within was a captain
Who had six times in that week
Sent messages to the king

pour li moustrer le grant desroy
le despit et le grant damage
quon faisoit en son heritage
et que tenir ne se pouoit
se secours ne li envoioit
li roys qui ja bien le savoit
son commandement fait avoit
au noble prince dentioche
qui est fors com chastiaus sus roche
en batailles fermes seurs
sages avisez et meurs
dous aus gens darmes et humains
et sestoit ses freres germains
engendrez de pere et de mere
et monsigneur jaque son frere
fu avec lui a ceste emprise
or vueil deviser la devise
comment li bons roys ordonna
qui la moult de son or donna
au prince bailla .vi. galees
bien garnies bien estofees
li princes avoit la premiere
qui estoit aperte et legiere
si que cestoit uns drois souhais
la fu li contes de rohais
et sestoit jour et nuit o ly
messires symons thynoly
et maint autre de son pais
dont il nestoit mie hais

Le tricoplier ot la seconde
qui legierement flote en londe
de la mer · bien estoit garnie
et savoit en son compaingnie
monsigneur jehan guibelin
qui est attrais de noble lin
et monsigneur jaque petit
que sarrazins aiment petit
et bien leur a moustre sans faille
a son espee qui bien taille
et messires robers li rous
uns bons chevaliers · et se vous
men volez plus avant enquerre
plus nen say · nez fu dengleterre

Apres messires jehans pastes
un chevaliers qui sest hastes
dentrer en la maison donnour
car bien scevent grant et menour

In order to inform him of this great destruction,
This disrespect, this huge damage
Was then being done to his heritage;
And that he could hardly hold out
Were not help sent to him.
The king, who already knew this well,
Had given his orders
To the noble prince of Antioch,
Who is strong as a castle on a cliff,
Unyielding in battle, dependable,
Wise, intelligent, and mature,
Kind to both knights and ordinary folk,
And he was the king's full brother,
Begotten by his father and mother.
And my lord Jacques, his brother,
Accompanied him on this mission.
Now I will describe what provisions, what plans
That the good king made for his force,
Who bestowed much of his gold upon them.
To the prince he entrusted six galleys
Well furnished, well equipped.
The first belonged to the prince,
A ship both fast and light,
And so this was a proper delight.
The count of Rohais was therein
And accompanied him night and day,
My lord Simon de Thinoly,
And many another of his countrymen,
By whom he was hardly hated.

The second was the turcoplier's,
And it sailed easily over the waves,
Across the ocean—well equipped it was,
And he had in his company
My lord Jean d'Ibelin,
A man from a noble lineage,
My lord Jacques Petit,
Who loved the Saracens but little
(And without fail, he had ably shown
Them his sword that cuts well),
And my lord Robert the Red,
A goodly knight; and if you
Wish to ask me more about him,
This is all I know—he was born in England.

And then my lord Jean Pastes,
A knight who hastened
To enter into the house of honor.
For the high-born and humble knew well

quil a toudis quis des a senfance
pris · honneur · armes · et vaillance
et tant a fait que receus
est en nombre des esleus
car son grant bien bon le parfait
de cuer · de pensee · et de fait
et monsigneur guy li baveus
qui nest gueres de li mains preus
ces .ii. sus haute mer salee
avoient la tierce galee
ces .ii. au roy firent depry
que monsigneur jehan moustry
leur baillast pour leur souverain
mais li bons roy par saint verain
dist quil leur voloit bien baillier
pour leur galee avitaillier
et que la seroit leurs compains
e non mie leurs souverains
la ot maint chevalier estrange
digne donneur et de loange
de mainte estrange region
dont je vous feray mention
des francois especiaument
vous parleray premierement
car avec ces .ii. se tenoient
pour ce que de leur langue estoient

En la galee dont je conte
.xxv. chevaliers par conte
avoit que tous vous nommeray cccxxxviiiR
ne ja ne vous en mentyray
eins les nommeray tout premiers
et puis apres les escuiers
messires foulquaus dachiach
qui nest pas long de berierach
dont longuement me suis teus
estoit la · et fu esleus
de tous a porter la baniere
de nostre dame toute entiere
et certes il est vrais francois
je le puis bien dire · queinsois
volt deguerpir toute sa terre
questre homme dou roy dengleterre
na son fil le duc de guienne
quant la duchee fu premiers sienne
.ii. fois en champ sest combatus
sans estre vaincus nabatus
et en bataille plus de .xxx.
voire certes plus de quarante

That since childhood he had always sought out
Praise, reputation, arms, and valor,
And accomplished so much
He was welcomed among the elect
Because his great virtue had very much perfected
His heart, his thoughts, and conduct;
Also my lord Gui le Baveux,
A man hardly less valiant than him.
These two, over the towering and salty sea,
Sailed on the third galley.
These two had asked the king
To give them my lord Jean Monstry
As their commander,
But in turn the good king, by St. Verain,
Said he would fittingly arrange
That their ship would be well garrisoned;
And that he would be their companion
And not at all their chief.
There was many a foreign knight
Worthy of honor and praise
From many a far-off region,
And these I will mention.
The French, in particular,
I will speak of first,
For they stuck by these two
Since they were of the same language.

In the galley I am describing
Were twenty-five knights in number,
All of whom I'll name.
Nor will I deceive you in this,
But give their names straightaway,
And afterwards those of the squires.
My lord Fulke of Achiach,
Which is not far from Bergerac,
Of whom I've been silent a long time,
Was there, and had been chosen
By all to carry the banner
Of Our Lady by himself.
Surely he is a true Frenchman.
I can state this quite firmly
Because he'd rather lose all his lands
Than become the man of the English king
Or of his son the duke of Guienne
Since the duchy did first become his.
Twice he engaged in single tournament combat
And was never vanquished or knocked down;
And more than thirty times in the general melee,
Truly more than forty, this is certain,

de grans proesses a fait maintes
nez est de leveschie de saintes
la fu li sires de clervaus
messires guillaumes de saus
messire oiselle dou fay
messires jaque de mailly
et le signour de nentoullet
qui est cointe et appertelet
renaus et robers li baveus
qui sont cousin germain tous .ii.
et enfant monsigneur guy
messires giles de poissy
et de bouviller joudouin
et le signeur de saint martin
messires gobers de la boue
qui moult volentiers danse et houe
aveques dames et pucelles
quant elles sont cointes et belles
et monsigneur wautier de lor
qui ne fait pas trop grant tresor
messires jehans de lornis
et si estoit ce mest avis
uns chevaliers quest sans reproche
cest messire herve le coche
messires raus de chenevieres
et messires jehans de vendieres
messires philippe domont
et saquet de blaru qui mont
desire honneur et pris avoir
trop plus les aimme quautre avoit
messire pierre de groiselle
qui het le temps quant il gresille
jehans de saus robert ballida
ces .ii. furent chevalier la
et pluseurs autres chypriens
genevois et veniciens
qui estoient vaillans et bons
dont je ne say nommer les nons

Or vueil les escuiers nommer
qui la monterent seur la mer
en la galee dont je di
premiers mansaus de rosigny
qui au siege fu si vaillans
quon le tint pour des mieus faisans
morir le fist ses vasselages
dont ce fu pites et damages
jehans de reins au cuer hardi
et puis raulins de handressi

And he has accomplished many deeds of prowess.
He was born in the bishopric of Saintes.
There was the lord of Clairvaux,
My lord Guillaume de Saus,
My lord Oisellet dou Fay,
My lord Jacques de Mailly,
And the lord of Nantoullet,
A wise and intelligent man he is;
Renaut and Robert le Baveux,
Who are full brothers
And the children of my lord Gui;
My lord Giles de Poissy,
And Jédouin de Bouviller,
And the lord of St. Martin,
My lord Gobert de la Bove,
A man who willingly dances and frolics
With ladies and young girls
When they are attractive and pretty;
And my lord Gautier de Lor,
Who does not make much of treasure,
My lord Jean de Lornis.
And there present, I believe,
Was a knight who is beyond reproach,
That's my lord Hervé le Coche;
My lord Raus de Chenevieres,
And my lord Jean de Vendieres;
My lord Philippe d'Aumont,
And Saquet de Blaru, a man quite eager
To acquire praise and honor,
Who loves these more than possessions;
My lord Pierre de Gresille,
Who hates the weather when it hails.
Jean de Sous, Robert Ballida
—These two knights were there,
And a number of other Cypriots,
Genoese, and Venetians,
Who were virtuous and valiant men;
And them I cannot call by name.

Now I intend to name the squires
Who had gone to sea
On the galley I'm talking about.
First, Mansard de Rosigny,
Who was so courageous at the siege
He was considered one of those who did the most.
His warlikeness caused his death,
And this was both a pity and shame.
Jean de Reims, with the brave heart,
And then Raulins de Handressi;

apres le bastart de corbon
bonan de bon · baudri de bon
tous .ii. freres et furent au siege
et sont de leveschie de liege
jehan de contes · robesson bonne
qui grans cops de lespee donne
et si ne vueil pas oublier
le bon jehan de bouviller
que jaim · nendruet de brabant
sans orgueil nul et sans bobant
.ii. tres bons escuiers de flandres
qui ne sont pas des autres mendres
en hardement et en bonte cccxxxviiiV
cest lambequin de le conte
lautre a non hostes boutellin
qui het tant la gent apollin
que .ii^{c}. en a mis a mort
dont je nay pite ne remort
et hervey de lamenevain
.i. bon escuier de la main
y fu · et sot en sa compangnie
.x. bons escuiers de bretaingnie
qui tuit sont a bien faire entais
ne say leurs noms pour ce men tais
de chypre et dautre region
dont je ne fais pas mention

La quarte galee conduit
a grant joie et a grant deduit
uns chevaliers de grant renom
florimont de lesparre a nom
nez est dou pais de gascongne
si com la la langue le tesmogne
de lesparre est sires clamez
mais il fu repris et blasmes
dune escarmuche que la fist
qui ne fu pas de grant profit
comment quil le feist pour bien
et pour vaillance on le scet bien
si com ci apres le savez
quant bien leu ce livre avez
la ot .iii. chevaliers estranges
monsigneur bertran de benanges
quon tenoit pour bon chevalier
cointe apert · courtois · et legier
qui aimme honneur et het debas
oncle dou captal est de bas
monsigneur jehan de rochefort
qui est bretons · et tire fort

Also, the bastard of Corbon,
Bonau de Bon, Baudri de Bon,
Two brothers are they and were at the siege,
And they are from the bishopric of Lièges;
Jean de Contes, Robesson Bonne,
A man who delivers great swordstrokes.
And I don't wish to ignore
Good Jean de Bouviller,
Whom I love, nor Endruet de Brabant,
A man of no arrogance or haughtiness.
There were two good squires from Flanders,
No less worthy than the others
In courage and in virtue:
These are Lambequin de le Conté
And one more, by name Hostes Boutellin,
Who hates all infidels, the people of Apollin,
Of whom he has killed two hundred,
And I feel no remorse or pity for them.
Also Hervé de Lamenevain,
A squire good with his hands,
Was present, with ten good squires
From Brittany among his company,
Who were each quite eager to do well;
Others whose names I know not, so I'll be silent,
From Cyprus and other places,
And them I'll not mention.

It was a knight of great renown
Who commanded the fourth galley
With joy and great delight.
His name was Florimont de Lesparre.
In the Gascon country he was born,
As his speech reveals.
He is called the lord of Lesparre.
But he was blamed and faulted on the campaign
Because of a fight he there provoked
That yielded little profit
Even though he engaged to do well
And gain honor, as is well known,
And as you will find out hereafter
When you have read this book well through.
Three foreign knights were with him:
My lord Bertrand de Benauges,
Who was considered a good knight,
Wise, skillful, courteous, and able;
A man who loves honor and hates argument,
Uncle of the captal of Bas;
My lord Jean de Rochefort,
Who is a Breton and strives mightily

a haute honneur et soir et main
monsigneur jehan de sovain
qui est engevins · la estoient
et nuit et jour · se compaingnoient
thiebaut dou pont et maint preudomme
estoient la que pas ne nomme

La .v^e^. avoit cordeliers
de puignon qui est chevaliers
bons et hardis · vaillans · adrois
sages · courtois en tous endrois
et sot bonne chevalerie
de la duchee de normendie
car le signeur de baqueville
et le signeur destouteville
qui est drois sires de torcy
et le tres bon seneschal qui
het et fuit toutes maises langues
aussi le signeur de bellangues
signeur de vimes en vimeu
comme sage vaillant et preu
messire jehan de caieu
qui moult bien y tenoit son lieu
y furent et main compaingnons
dont je ne say nommer les noms
messires bremons de la vote
ot la siste qui par mer flote
plus legierement cune aloe
ne vole dont chascuns la loe
garnie estoient de bonnes gens
qui sont songneus et diligens
de serchier la mer et la terre
pour avoir honneur et acquerre
il y avoit .i. sien cousin
que bien congnoissent sarrasins
aus grans cops quil leur donne et baille
de son espee qui bien taille
moult leur fait peinnes et martyres
cest de la vote li drois sires
et si avoit dou dauphinal
.i. chevalier sage et loial ·
cest li sires de chassenages
et vraiement ses vasselages
nest pas oubliez ne teus
eins est souvent ramenteus
car chascuns laimme et loe et prise
qui scet son fait et son emprise
et le signeur de monbouchier cccxxxixR
que li dieux darmes a moult chier

Toward exalted honor both day and night;
My lord Jean de Sovain,
Who is an Angevin—all these were present,
Were his companions night and day.
Thibaut du Pont and many a brave man
Whom I do not name were there also.

The fifth was commanded by Cordeliers
De Puignon, who is a knight
Virtuous and brave, valiant, skillful,
Wise, courtly in every way.
And he had many fine knights
From the duchy of Normandy,
For present were the lord of Baqueville
And the lord of Estouteville,
Who is the true lord of Torcy,
And the very virtuous seneschal
Who hates and puts to flight all evil foreigners;
Also the lord of Bellangues,
The lord of Vimes in Vimeu,
A wise, brave, and hardy man
My lord Jean de Caieu,
Who stands his ground quite firmly,
As well as many companions
Whose names I cannot utter.
My lord Brémont de la Voulte
Had the sixth galley, which sailed
On the ocean more lightly than a lark
Can fly, which every man did praise.
Filled it was with good men
Who are eager and diligent
In searching the land and sea
For the opportunity of gaining and winning honor.
There was one of his cousins
Whom the Saracens knew well
For the great blows he'd given and dealt them
With his sword that cuts well;
He's caused them much pain and suffering.
He is the true lord of la Voulte,
And he had with him a knight both wise
And true from Dauphinal,
And this was the lord of Chassenages,
And truly his chivalry
Was not passed over in silence or forgotten
But rather often brought to mind,
For every man who knows his deeds
And character loves, praises, and esteems him;
And the lord of Monbouchier,
Whom the god of war loves quite dearly;

de jancourt messires phelippes
qui ne prise mie .ii. pipes
le caraman ne sa puissance
et messire ame de cousance
qui prise encor meins son orgueil
messire hue de vernueil
et le signeur de flavigny
furent la et rabette aussy
et tribouillart de tribouville
et .i. chevalier de sezille
et pluseurs autres dont ne say
les noms · si que je men tairay

Es .vi. galees dont je conte
.vi^{c}. hommes darmes par conte
estoient apers et legiers
et environ .iii^{c}. archiers
mais le prince et le tricoplier
florimont et le cordelier
ne feirent pas lonc sejour
eins partirent tout en .i. jour
ne furent en ville nen bourc
jusquatant quil vinrent a courc
messires bremons et moustry
.i. jour feirent de detry
en chypre · que .i. jour demourerent
et tantost apres eaus alerent
les .iiii. galees sen vont
et li maronnier qui ens sont
tant ont a la mer estrive
que tuit sont a courc arrive
par .i. dimenche bien matin
et vraiement li sarrazin
qui dessus la montaingne estoient
logie · bien venir les veoient
et si tost comme il les veirent
de la montaingne descendirent
nompas tuit mais une partie
pour faire aus nos une envaye
entre la montaingne et la ville
estoient la gent plein de guile
et les nostres en grant couvine
descendirent de la marine
en courc entrerent par la porte
qui estoit bonne et belle et forte
quant il furent tuit descendu
longuement nont pas atendu
einsois issirent tuit a plain
par la porte devers le plain

My lord Philippe of Jaucourt,
Who does not care two straws
For the Caraman or his power,
And my lord Amé de Coutances,
Who values even less the Caraman's arrogance;
My lord Hugh de Vernueil,
And the lord of Flavigny
And Robette, also were there
And Tribouillart de Tribouville;
And a knight from Seville:
And several others whose names
I do not know—and thus pass over in silence.

In those six galleys I'm describing for you
Were armed knights, six hundred in number,
Men able and skilled they were,
As well as about three hundred archers.
Now the prince and the turcoplier,
Florimont and Le Cordelier
Did not delay long,
But rather departed all in a group one day.
They entered no town or city
Until arriving at Gorhigos.
My lords Brémont and Monstry
Remained one day
In Cyprus, so that they were one day late.
As soon as possible they followed after.
The four galleys proceeded,
And the seamen within
Did their best to pass over the sea
Until every one arrived at Gorhigos
Well into the morning on a Sunday.
And truly the Saracens
Who were encamped atop
The mountains could see them well
And as soon as they spied the force
Came down from the heights,
Not the whole army, but only part,
To mount a raid against our men.
Between the mountain and the town
Were these people full of guile.
And our troops, in fine spirits,
Made their way from the shore,
Entering Gorhigos through the gate
That was beautiful and well built and strong.
When they had all disembarked,
They did not wait long,
But sallied forth in the open
Through the gate facing the plain.

Le prince et sa gent sarresterent
pres dou chastel · et sordonnerent
bien et bel et par grant avis
car il veirent vis a vis
les annemis dieu qui traioient
de toutes pars quan quil pooient
mais le prince not pas conseil
de li combatre · car a lueil
voit ceuls qui les doivent secoure
pour ce ne leur volt pas sus courre
et satendoit les .ii. galees
qui darrier furent demourees
ou milleurs gens avoir devoit
et plus quavec lui nen avoit

Entre lui et les annemis
qui seur le plain sestoient mis
navoit pont ne fosse · ne barre
si que li sires de lesparre
savanca · et leur couri seure
mais ne fu pas a la bonne heure
quil et sa gent furent blecie
et villainnement rachacie
de trait fu bleciez en la main
et messires jehan sovain
y fu blecies par mi le pie
dune saiette ou dun espie
thiebaus dou pont fu presques pris
mais uns escuiers de haut pris
le deffendi moult vaillanment
la le secouri vitement
messires jehan de rochefort cccxxxixV
qui li fist aide et confort
et le bon signeur de benanges
et pluseurs compaingnons estranges
li aidierent tant quil revint
mais il en tua plus de .xx.
en leur bataille · et en chastel
se retreirent bien et bel
com gent sage et bien ordenee
plus ni ot fait ceste journee
le diemanche dont je vous chant
einsi comme a soleil couchant
arriva moustry et ses gens
la fu li bons messires jehans
pastez · li vaillans et li preus
et messires guys li baveus
avec tres bonne compaingnie

The prince and his company halted
Not far from the fortress and formed up
Well and fairly and in the proper way,
For they were looking face to face
At the enemies of God who were shooting at them
From every side as much as they could.
Yet it was not the prince's plan to offer
Battle to them because he had his eye upon
Those whom he was appointed to save
And so did not wish to attack the enemy;
In any case he was awaiting the two galleys
That had been held up behind them,
On which some better men were to be found,
And more than he had with him.

Between him and the enemy,
Who had positioned themselves on the plain,
There was no ditch, no barrier,
And so the lord of Lesparre
Advanced to attack them.
But the moment was not right for this,
And so he and his people were bloodied
And villainously put to flight.
He was wounded on the hand by an arrow,
And my lord Jean Sovain
Was wounded through the foot
By either a bolt or a lance.
Thiebaut du Pont was nearly captured,
But a very able squire
Defended him quite valiantly;
On the field lord Jean de Rochefort
Came quickly to his assistance,
Who brought him aid and help.
And the good lord of Benauges,
Along with many foreign-born companions,
Provided assistance until he retired;
But he killed more than twenty
In their ranks. And into the fortress
They retreated nicely and in good order,
Like wise and well-disciplined warriors.
Nothing more was done that day.
The Sunday I sing to you about
Just as the sun was going to set
Moustry and his people arrived.
The good lord Jean Pastes
Was with him, the valiant and worthy man,
Along with my lord Gui le Baveux
And a very fine company

de chevaliers descuerie
preus · vaillans · et delection
dont je vous ay fait mention

Quant au chastel furent retrait
tout belement et tout a trait
et li sarrazin ensement
sestoient tout premierement
mis de la plainne en la montaingne
honte et mescheance leur veigne
car ce sont gent qui trop nous heent
et qui a nous destruire beent
tous les chevaliers a mande
le prince · et leur a demande
conseil · de ce que faire doit
car ses anemis a lueil voit
qui sont logiez en forte place
si quil est bien raison quil face
par leur conseil ce quil doit faire
contre la gent de put affaire
messire guis a entendu
le prince · si a respondu
sagement sans faire demeure
sire il est tart si nest par heure
de conseillier a dire voir
nencor ne poons nous savoir
leurs alees · ne leurs venues
leurs entrees ne leurs issues
si que demain nous les sarons
et seur ce nous conseillerons
et si porra bien avenir
que vous verrez bremont venir
sil vient vous en serez plus fors
chascuns respont cest nos acors

Apres messires jehans pastez
li dist · sire ne vous hastez
car mauvaise haste nest preus
et ce sera honneur et preus
de faire ce fait sagement
et nompas trop hastivement
nous sommes en leure venu
et tantost nous a convenu
yssir hors a moult petit fait
sages est qui par avis fait
et se messires bremons vient
milleur conseil ne vous couvient
car il est sages et soutis

Of both knights and squires,
Men worthy, brave, and hand-picked,
The which I have mentioned.

Afterward they withdrew into the fortress
In good order and quite nicely,
And the Saracens in turn
All at once made their way from
The plain for the mountains.
May shame and bad fortune be their lot
Since these are people who hate us fiercely
And are eager for our destruction!
The prince summoned
All his knights and asked them
To advise what should be done
Since with his eyes he was looking at his enemies,
Who were lodged in a strong position;
And so it was surely right that he do
Whatever they counseled should be done
Against these no-account people.
My lord Gui listened to
The prince, then responded
Wisely without any hesitation:
"Sire, it is late and thus not the time
For a council, to speak the truth,
Nor have we yet learned anything
Of their comings or goings,
Their pathways and their routes,
And so in the morning we'll find out
These things and then advise you accordingly.
And it could well be the case
That you will see Brémont arrive.
If he does, you will be even stronger."
Every man answered: "We agree with this."

Afterward my lord Jean Pastes
Said to him: "Sire, don't rush
Since ill-considered haste is not wise,
And it would be honorable and worthy
To do this thing with wisdom
And not act impetuously.
We have just arrived,
And already we have been forced
To sally out to little effect.
It's the wise man who acts with counsel,
And if my lord Brémont comes,
We could ask for no better advisor
Because the man is wise and intelligent,

loyaus · preudons · nobles gentis
et sa gent hardis et vassaus
en batailles et an assaus
et soy dire en alemaingne
au noble et bon roy de behaingne
cuns sires doit en toute terre
estre a son dessus de sa guerre
et a son dessous au tournoy
ne je ne voy chose encor noy
que bremont ne doies atendre
et se pouez moult bien entendre
a conseillier au matinet
le princes respondi bien est
je lo que cils consaus se teingne
et que au matin chascuns reveigne

Atant de la se departirent
et en pluseurs pars se partirent
car chascuns logier sen ala cccxlR
li uns sa et li autres la
li uns pis et li autres mieus
pres dou chastel en pluseurs lieus
li autre furent es galees ·
qui en mer furent aencrees
quen chastel pas tous ne pooient
pour les engiens qui y getoient
le lundi matin se leverent
et seur la place sen alerent
pour considerer les alees
les yssues et les entrees
des sarrazins · car sans doubtance
mout avoient la grant poissance
quant il orent bien tout veu
ymagine et conceu
leur maniere · et le logement
et leur estat tout clerement
longuement nont pas sejourne
eins sont au prince retourne
pour avoir conseil quon feroit
et sa euls se combateroit
et einsi comme il conseilloient
en une chambre ou il estoient
il oirent une grant noise
ni a celui qui ne se coise
pour oir que ce pooit estre
si ouvrirent une fenestre
pour mieux veoir et plus a plain
sil avoit nelui seur le plain

Trustworthy, valiant, noble, and genteel,
And a company powerful and courageous
In battle and in the assault.
And I've heard tell in Germany,
From the good king of Bohemia,
That a lord should in every land
Come out on top in war
And be at the bottom in tournaments.
And I've heard or seen nothing yet
To argue that you shouldn't wait for Brémont,
And—with good results—you could see about
Holding a council when morning comes."
The prince answered: "That's good.
I recommend we accept this advice;
Every man should return in the morning."

At once they took their leave
And departed for their different destinations
Since every man was going to his lodging,
Some here and others there
(And some lodgings were better, others worse)
In a number of places near the citadel.
Some remained in the galleys
Which were anchored in the sea,
For not everyone could go to the citadel
Because of the siege engines shooting into it.
On Monday morning they arose
And went into the open
To discover the enemy's comings
And goings, also the pathways
Of the Saracens; for doubtless
They had much the greater force.
When they had seen everything,
Thought over and considered
Their disposition and positions,
Their readiness too, all quite clearly,
These men did not wait long,
But returned at once to the prince
In order to hold their council about what to do
And to determine if they should offer battle.
And even as they were discussing
In the room where they were meeting,
They heard a great uproar.
Not a man there didn't keep still
To discover what this might be.
And they opened a window
To see better and more clearly
If anyone was in the plain.

et envoierent sus la tour
pour veoir le pais dentour
si leur fu raporte et dit
par .i. qui les congnut et vit
aler en la place premiers
que cestoient les maronniers
moustry qui font une esquermuche
et moustry .i. sien vallet huche
et li envoie pour savoir
de lesquermuche tout le voir
et tantost li a raporte
et dit que cestoit verite
et que turc seffreent forment
et sarment tuit communement
et sonnent trompes · naquaires
et instrumens plus de .x. paires
vous poez oir leurs tabours
qui ne les oit il est bien sours
et ja sont descendus aval
pluseurs a piet et a cheval
et li autre gardent les pas
pour ytant quil ne vuelent pas
que nuls puisse monter amont
messires philippes domont
respondi · que vaus cils sermons
partons nous et si nous armons
si que tuit en leure sarmerent
et sus la place sen alerent
et vraiement il sordenoient
com gens qui leur annemis voient
la vit pastez et li baveux
et moustry · que cestoient ceuls
qui issoient de leurs galee
et faisoient la retournee
car li sarrasin les chassoient
et la place perdu avoient
les .ii. enfans monsigneur gui
le baveus · y estoient qui
moult vaillament se combatoient
et la place tenir cuidoient
mais il ne la poirent tenir
einsois les couvint revenir
et jodouin de bouviller
ne se faisoit mie celer
car fierement se combati
et plus de .xx. en abati
et ses freres ne se feint mie
eins li fait bonne compaingnie

And they sent men up the tower
To look over the countryside.
And it was reported and told to them
By some man who knew them and had seen
Them enter the place first
That it was the seamen of Monstry
Who were involved in a skirmish.
And Monstry summoned one of his servants
And sent him to find out
What the truth was about this battle.
And the man reported back quickly to him
And said that this was in fact true.
All the turks were in an uproar,
And taking to arms in a group
And sounding trumpets and drums
And more than twenty pairs of instruments.
"You can hear their drums;
Whoever doesn't hear them is certainly deaf.
Many are coming down from the heights
Both mounted and on foot,
And others are guarding the pass
Because they do not want
Anyone to be able to move up against them."
My lord Philippe d'Aumont
Gave this answer: "What's the point of this talk?
Let's quit the place and arm ourselves."
And then every one took up his weapons
And assembled on the plain at once.
And they truly formed up
Like an army that looks upon its enemies.
There Pastes and Li Baveux and Monstry
Saw that it was the men
Who had left their galley
Who were now retreating
Because the Saracens were pursuing them
And they had lost their position.
The two sons of my lord
Gui le Baveux were present,
And they were fighting quite valiantly
And intended to hold the place.
But they could not hold there,
Instead were forced to return.
And Jédouin de Bouviller
Did not in any way take cover,
But fought quite fiercely
And struck down twenty enemies or more.
And his brother did not weaken in the least,
But ably supported him.

Quant il veirent la maniere
il leverent une baniere
et ordenerent leur bataille cccxlV
chascuns lespee qui bien taille
tenoit en sa main toute nue
adont ni ot ordre tenue
car tantost leur coururent seure
si fierement quen petit deure
la place qui estoit perdue
leur fu tout quitement rendue
et les mirent qui que sen pleingne
jusques au piet de la montaingne
et si pres que li sarrazin
qui leur estoient dur voisin
pooient geter pleinnement
seur eaus · sans nul empeschement
la ot mainte teste copee
grant brait · grant bruit · et grant huee
quant ceuls qui estoient dessus
veirent leurs gens einsi confus
mors et blecies · et affolez
et de crestiens defoulez
il lancoient pierres caillos
mangonniaus · saiettes · garros
plus dru que la noif ne la gresle
ne chiet quant il nege ou il gresle
la furent blecie durement
pastez · li baveux · et leur gent
messires guillaumes de saus
et moustri li bons amiraus
de la boue li bons gobers
qui nest pas a son avoir sers
il fu moult blecies en visage
par hardement et vasselage
et tout de pierres et de trais
mais pour ce ne se sont retrais
quil naient maintenu lestour
tant quil ont victoire et honnour
mais il furent tres bien batus
et pluseurs autres abatus
le bon mensart de resigny
ne doy je pas mettre en oubly
car il y fu bons et vaillans
et li uns des tres bien faisans
par mi les jambes fu bleciez
en pluseurs lieus bien le sachiez
et nompourquant ceste journee
fu pour son honneur adjournee

After they had looked over the situation,
They raised a banner
And formed their ranks.
Each man grasped in his hand
The naked sword that cuts well.
Yet this formation was not held for long,
For at once they fell
Upon them so fiercely
That the position that had been lost
Was quite completely given back to them,
And they advanced, whoever might bemoan it,
Right to the foot of the heights,
So close that the Saracens
Who were their fierce neighbors
Could easily shoot
At them without any difficulty.
There was many a head severed,
Great uproar, much shouting, and loud words.
When those in the positions above
Saw their men so disordered,
Killed and wounded and crazed
And pressed hard by the Christians,
They hurled down stones, boulders,
Mangonel shot, arrows, darts
More thickly than snow or hail falls
Whenever it does snow or hail.
Pastes, Le Baveux, and their people
Were wounded grievously in that spot,
Also, my lords Guillaume de Saus
And Monstry, the good admiral,
The valiant Gobert de la Bove,
Who was no slave to his wealth.
There he was wounded in the face
Because of his bravery and vigor,
And all their stones and arrows too.
Even so they did not retreat
Or break off the engagement
Until victory and honor were theirs.
But they were very much battered,
Some even beaten down.
The good Mensart de Resigny
I should forget not at all
Because he was brave and valiant there
And one of those who accomplished the most.
He was wounded through the legs
In several places, know it well.
And nonetheless this day dawned
As one in his honor.

Les sarrazins moult y perdirent
et nostre gent se retreirent
tout bellement · car bien savoient
que le pas gaingnier ne pooient
et sans doubte il estoit si fors
que riens ni vausist leur effors
si se treirent en la place
mais ades avoient la face
tournee vers les annemis
tous ensamble com bons amis
car vraiement tout en alant
retournoient en reculant
et en retournant relevoient
les bleciez qui cheus estoient
tant ont la monteingne eslongie
que dou chastel sont aprochie
et quil furent en mi la pleinne
la reprent chascuns son alainne
car plus estoient eschaufe
que sau feu se fussent chaufe
la estoient · et la leur vint
hommes darmes environ vint
qui estoient fres et nouviaus
darmes leur plaisoit li reviaus
et sestoient fors et corsus
si leur coururent encor sus
et vesci la cause pour quoi
il veoient le grant desroy
des annemis dieu qui traioient
a eaus · et pierres leur gettoient
fort et dru · et espessement
et si tres felonnessement
que ne le vous saroie dire
et si veoient le martyre
de ceuls qui estoient bleciez cccxliR
dont cestoit pitez et meschiez
et comment que bien blecie fussent
et que reposer se dehussent
avec les autres sen alerent
nonques pour ce ne sejournerent
la recommensa le hutin
plus grant que celui dou matin
mais nos gens si bien si prouverent
que les sarrazins rebouterent
jusques au pie de la montaingne
et la gent sauvage et griffaingne
denhaut trop plus fort quonques mais
leur getoient pierres de fais

The Saracens lost many men there
And our army withdrew
In good order, for they realized very well
They could not take the pass,
And in any case it was so strong
Their efforts would not be worth much.
And so they drew back to the plain,
But always they had their faces
Turned toward the enemy,
In a group like good companions.
Yet truly they moved out
To retreat, falling back,
And on their return they attended to
Those who had fallen wounded.
The mountain they left so far behind
That they neared the stronghold,
And they were in the middle of the plain.
There every man caught his breath
Because they were more overheated
Than if they had been warmed by a fire.
There they were, and there about twenty
Men at arms rushed up to them,
Who were fresh and untired;
The tumult of fighting pleased them
Because they were strong and well built.
They ran up to the others,
And here is the reason why.
They saw the great horde
Of God's enemies who were shooting
At them and throwing stones at them
Forcefully, often, and thickly,
And with such perfidiousness
I could not tell you.
And they witnessed the suffering
Of the men who had been wounded,
Which was both a pity and a shame.
And although they were wounded
And should have been resting,
They were moving with the others;
Never did they halt on that account.
The battle recommenced at that point,
Even fiercer than the one in the morning.
But our men proved themselves so able
They drove back the Saracens
To the foot of the mountain,
And that people fierce and savage
Threw masses of stones from on high,
More than they had before.

la fu mors droit au piet dou mont
messires phelippes domont
dont ce fu pitez et damages
car grans estoit ses vasselages
hardis estoit comme uns lyons
nonques ne fu veus li homs
quonques en jour de sa vie
li veist faire villonnie
et la fu bleciez si forment
.i. tres bon escuier norment
quen leure fu mors sans respas
tout droit a lentree dou pas
bonan de bon y fu occis
et aveques li plus de .vi.
hommes darmes · dont ne savoie
nommer les noms · et toute voie
il furent mort piteusement
comment que ce fust vaillamment
toute la route sarresta
seur le corps des mors a esta
car il les cuidoient lever
et eaus en chastel raporter
mais il en vain se travilloient
qua force avoir ne les pooient
car la force nestoit pas leur
dont il avoient grant doleur
la se combati bien et fort
messires jehans de rochefort
et y fu tres bons chevaliers
aussi y fu bons escuiers
mensaus · nommez de resigny
sus le corps de son bon amy
et son cousin · car il samoient
et compaingnons darmes estoient
quant nos gens virent laventure
qui moult leur fu crueuse et dure
tous ensamble se retreirent
et seur la place se meirent
si comme a lautre fois tout a fait
na ceste heure ni ot plus fait
mais nest pas raison que joublie
.i. chevalier de normendie
qui saquet de blaru sapelle
y debati si sa querelle
seur le corps phelippe domont
quil na homme en tout le mont
sil en heust autretant fait
quon ne le tenist a grant fait

There right at the foot of the mountain,
My lord Philippe d'Aumont was killed,
And this was a shame and pity,
For his prowess was great.
Brave as a lion the man was,
Nor did anyone ever during all
The days of his life
See him do anything improper.
And there grievously wounded
Was a very able Norman squire
Who, beyond saving, died within the hour,
And this was at the entrance to the pass.
Bonau de Bon was killed there,
And more than six along with him.
These were men at arms, whose names
I cannot name, yet in any event
They were killed in a most miserable way
Though showing much valor.
The whole column halted
Near the bodies of these dead
Because they intended to lift up
And bear them into the stronghold.
But they struggled in vain to do so,
For they could not have them by force
Because the advantage was not on their side,
And this caused them great sorrow.
There my lord Jean de Rochefort
Fought ably and well
And was there a very worthy knight
A good squire was there as well
Named Mensart de Resigny,
Who lay across the body of Bon, his friend
And cousin, because they loved one another
And were companions in arms.
When our people saw this turn of events,
Which was difficult and hard to bear,
They drew back in a group
And formed up in the open space
Just as they had done before.
At this time nothing more happened.
Yet it is not right that I neglect
A knight from Normandy
Who was named Saquet de Blaru.
He struggled so in the battle
Over the body of Philippe d'Aumont
That no man in all the world
Who did this much would not
Be thought to have accomplished a great deal.

Ainsi nos gens se sont retrait
qui sont en plus de cent lieus trait
dont les fers ne sont mie hors
et bleciez en teste et en corps
de pierres et de mangonniaus
que li turc ont gette seur eaus
et si veoient clerement
quil ne pooient nullement
gaingnier le pas ne la bataille
car il ni a homme qui vaille
qui ne soit einsi atournez
et pour ce sont il retournez
et sestoient .xxx. contre un
de gens darmes et de commun
li sarrazin que dieus confunde
de pierre dengien ou de fonde
sus la place fu li barnages
ou il trouverent .ii. messages
dou prince qui la les atendent cccxliV
et estroitement leur commandent
de par la prince quil retournent
en chastel et plus ne sejournent
car le prince est forment courciez
de ce quil sont ainsi bleciez
et quant onques il commencerent
lescarmuche · si retournerent
et raporterent rochefort
qui estoit bleciez si tres fort
quil ne se pooit soustenir
ne sans aide revenir
et maint autre que pas ne nomme
qui le jour furent tuit preudomme
les .ii. messages nommeray
ne ja ne les vous celeray
lun estoit monsigneur fouquaut
darchiach · qui moult scet et vaut
et lautre bertran de benanges
qui est hardis et armeranges
et la fu bleciez en visage
en venant faire son message
dune saiette barbelee
il avoit le de la galee
moustry .vi^{xx}. hommes armez
mais si estoient entames
si bleciez et si mal traities
quil nen y ot pas .xx. haities
chascuns fist remuer sa plaie
po en y a qui ne sesmaie
pour le chaut qui trop les grevoit

And so our men withdrew,
Having suffered more than a hundred wounds,
The iron not yet out of their bodies,
Wounded in the head and body they were
By stones and mangonel shot
That the Turks had hurled down upon them.
And they realized very well
They could in no way
Win either the pass or the battle
Because every man, no matter how valiant,
Would be turned back in this way.
And for this reason they retreated.
And the Saracens were thirty against
Our one, with men at arms
And common soldiers—may God confound them
With rocks from catapults and mangonels!
The host was in the plain
And there met two messengers
From the prince who were waiting
To order them—and strictly
—On behalf of the prince to return
Inside the stronghold and remain no longer.
For the prince was quite angry
Because they suffered so many wounds
And because they had ever initiated
The fight. So they returned
And brought back Rochefort,
Who was wounded so severely
He could not stand up,
Nor come back unassisted,
Along with many others I do not name
Who on this day were all valiant men.
I will name the two messengers,
Not intending to keep this from you.
The first was my lord Fulke
Of Achiach, a man of much knowledge and worth,
While the other was Bertrand de Benauges,
Who was brave and skilled in arms;
Wounded he was in the face there
By a barbed arrow
As he came to deliver his message.
From Monstry's galley there had been
Twenty-six armed men,
Yet these were now all so spent,
So wounded, and in such poor shape
That only twenty remained fit.
Every man looked to his wounds.
Not many were untroubled
By the heat that oppressed them so much,

et po de mires y avoit
le prince fist fermer la porte
et les cles avec li en porte
pour ce quentrer on ny peust
nissir · se bien ne li pleust

Celle nuit vint et descendi
bremons · et quant il entendi
coment nostre gent sont menez
a po quil ne fu forsenes
et tant avoit de dueil et dire
que ne le vous saroie dire

La nuit passa et li jours vint
si biaus que plus biau ne couvint
au matin li princes manda
les chevaliers · et demanda
conseil · comment on puist trouver
voie · pour sarrazins grever
quen si tres forte place estoient
logie · quavoir ne les pooient
sans grant damage et sans grant perte
chascuns le voit cest chose aperte
et si vient si tres mal a point
que nostre gent sont en tel point
qua peinnes sen puet on aidier
on ne puet gueres souhaidier
plus mal que la chose nous vient
et pour ce aviser nous couvient
et que chascuns son conseil die
loyaument · et sans flaterie
car y nous couvient tous ensamble
boire a un hanap ce me samble
et chose a tous touchant trouvee
doit estre de tous esprouvee
chascuns dist son oppinion
mais toute leur conclusion
fu denvoier devers le roy
et quon li mande le desroy
lestat la maniere · la guise
dou caraman · et son emprise
sa puissance et son logement
et quon leur envoie briefment
ce quon porra darbalestriers
car il leur est trop grans mestiers
et cest la chose que la route
dou caraman plus forment doubte
et qui plus leur porra grever
quant ce venra a lestriver

And there were few physicians.
The prince had the gate shut
And carried away the keys himself
So that no man could either enter
Or leave if he did not so wish.

That night Brémont arrived
And debarked. And when he heard
How our men had been led
He nearly went mad with rage.
Indeed he felt such sorrow and anger
I could not tell you.

Night passed and day broke;
No finer one could have dawned.
In the morning the prince summoned
His knights and sought
Advice about how the Saracens
Might in some way be assaulted
Since their position was so strong
That our men could not take them
Without great damage and hurt:
"Every man sees. It's obvious,
And it bodes very ill
That our men are in such a fix
They can be relieved only with difficulty.
A man could hardly imagine
How for us things might be worse.
And so we must hold a council
And let every man speaks his mind
Truthfully and without flattery.
For we must all drink
From the same cup, I believe.
And something found to affect every man
Must be attended to by one and all."
Each then spoke to his view,
And yet the conclusion of all
Was to send a message to the king
That informed him of the difficulties,
The conditions, the circumstances, and the facts
Concerning the Caraman and his expedition,
His strength and position;
That what crossbowmen
Could be provided should be quickly sent,
For of these they had great need
Since this is what the Caraman's soldiers
Should fear most strongly,
And these would do them the worst hurt
Whenever battle was rejoined.

et aussi quon noublie pas
comment nos gens furent au pas
bleciez · navrez · et mal baillis cccxliiR
et des sarrasins recueillis
et dire ceuls qui la sont mors
au pas · dont grans est li remors
et encor fu il devise
quant bien y orent tuit vise
par bon conseil seur et sage
que cils qui fera le message
en menra toutes les galees
qui furent a courc arrivees
par quoy turc et sarrazin cuident
que crestien sen voisent et vuident
et que dou chastel point nississent
einsois closement se tenissent
pour assaut que turc feroient
et se damont descenderoient
en la plainne pour assaillir
quadont porroient il saillir
hors · et combatre main a main
sans atendre jour ne demain
et ci entredeux gariront
les crestiens qui navrez sont
cest le conseil cest lordenance
des chevaliers en la presence
dou prince · et il la a acorde
einsi com je lay recorde

Le tricoplier fu esleus
et devant tous ramenteus
pour faire la messagerie
et il ne la refusa mie
eins y ala dieus le conduie
et li doint bon vent et sans pluie
le chastel feirent garnir
mieus quon pot jusquau revenir
moult se tenirent closement
et li sarrazin ensement
quen .viii. jours onques hors nissirent
ne sarrazins ne descendirent
et nompourquant toudis traioient
engiens et canons quil avoient
nen faisoient point de sejour
or avint au .ix^e^. jour
que nos gens a cui dieux doint grace
estoient seur une terrace
cest assavoir les estrangiers

And, also, no one should forget
How our men at the pass
Were wounded, hurt, and badly mauled
And were met there by the Saracens;
And there should be a report of who had been killed
At the pass, for which there was much sorrow.
And it was further decided,
After everything had been well considered,
Discussed in a wise, useful, and cautious fashion,
That the man to deliver the message
Would take back with him all the galleys
That had arrived in Gorhigos.
In this way the Turks and Saracens
Would think that the Christians had gone and departed;
And that they should sally no more from the castle,
But rather keep themselves inside
Because of any assault the Turks might make.
And if they came down from the heights
Into the plain in order to attack,
Then they could sally forth at once
And battle them hand to hand
Without waiting for any tomorrow.
And two among them would attend
To the Christians who were wounded.
That's the plan, that's the scheme
Of by the knights in the presence of
The prince; and he agreed with it,
Just as I've recorded here above.

The Turcoplier was chosen
And charged before them all,
To be the messenger.
This he hardly refused to do,
But went his way. May God escort
Him, provide a good wind and no rain!
The castle they fortified as best
They could until his return.
The men kept quite out of sight,
As did the Saracens too,
So they did not sally forth for eight days,
Nor did the Saracens come down,
But nonetheless kept up an unceasing bombardment
With the engines and cannons they had,
And never relented for a moment.
Now it happened that on the ninth day
Our people—may God bless them!
—Were upon on a terrace,
That is, the foreign knights were,

qui estoient fors et legiers
seur la terrasse sesbatoient
et de pluseurs choses parloient
et de la pooient veoir
le carman et tout son pooir
or vous diray ce quil avint
le caramans logier se vint
droitement devant ses engiens
et ses gens que japelle chiens
au bout de la cite deserte
ni avoient point de couverte
car nos gens de plain les veoient
qui dessus la terrasse estoient
.i. diemanche a leure que nonne
en chypre doit sonner ou sonne
tous leurs pavillons destendirent
et tous ensamble se treierent
au logeis dou caramant
je ne say pour quoy ne commant
li sires de lesparre vit
quil se deslogoient et dit
son le creoit hors isteroient
et quassez sejourne avoient
devers le prince sont ale
si ont tant dit et tant parle
que les portes furent ouvertes
et que le prince leur dist · certes
moy et mon frere sommes cy
sain et haitie la dieu mercy
et ni ara celui de nous
qui ne soit armez avec vous
ne qui de bien faire se feingne
et que laventure ne prengne
tele com dieux la nous donra
et quant le tricoplier venra
se nous les avons desconfis cccxliiV
liez en sera jen sui tous fis
mais nous faisons tout le contraire
de son conseil · ne men puis taire
et dou vostre bien le savez
quautrement consillie lavez

Le prince et sa gent sordenerent
et tuit li crestien sarmerent
et quant il furent bien arme
bien abillie bien acesme
et euls et toutes leurs maisnies
sordenerent en .iii. parties

Disporting themselves in that place
For they were strong and agile,
And they spoke of different matters.
From that place they could look upon
The Caraman and all his force.
Now I'll tell you what happened.
The Caraman moved to a position
Directly in front of his engines
And his people—whom I call dogs
—In the outskirts of the deserted city.
And they had no cover at all
Since our men could see them plainly,
The ones who were on the terrace above.
One Sunday, at the hour when noon
In Cyprus should be sounded or sounds,
The enemy abandoned their pavilions
And in a body moved down
To the position of the Caraman,
Why or how I do not know.
The lord of Lesparre noticed
Them change positions and declaimed
That, if it could be believed, they should sally forth,
Having stayed there long enough.
The men went to the prince
And spoke to them and said enough
To get all the gates opened,
Even as the prince told them: "Surely
My brother and I here
Are hale and hearty, thanks be to God!
And not a one among us
Won't take up arms along with you
Or be too timid to do right
And seize the opportunity,
Such as God will provide us.
And when the turcoplier comes,
If we have destroyed them,
He'll be pleased—of this I'm entirely certain.
But we are going against his orders
And advice—I can't ignore that
—And your counsel too—as well you know
Since you cautioned him to do otherwise."

The prince and his army made ready,
And all the Christians took to arms.
And when they had their weapons in hand,
Were well equipped, appropriately accoutered,
The knights along with their retinues
Formed into three groups

et en feirent .iii. batailles
qui nestient mie de merdailles
eins estoient je le say bien
toutes gens donneur et de bien
li princes conduit la premiere
et faisoit porter sa baniere
nostre dame · car cest uns signes
biaus et bons · gracieus · et dignes
bremons conduisoit la seconde
nil navoit homme en tout le monde
qui mieus conduire la sceust
na qui li mestiers tant pleust
lespare la tierce conduit
qui sagement la guie et duit
or vous vueil .i. conte conter
nos gens ne pooient monter
sus la monteingne nullement
fors par trois lieus tant seulement
quil ni avoit que .iii. entrees
vers le chastel asses po lees
entre vies murs et viez terrasses
ne riens ni avoit que les places
nostre gent issirent a plain
et se meirent seur le plain
le prince ot la voie senestre
et lespare prist celle a destre
et bremons avoit la moienne
car par droit devoit estre sienne
pour ce que plus nen y avoit
et quant li caramans les voit
quil estient en tel conroy
il dist · certeinnement je voy
gens enragiez et hors dou sens
il ne sont pas plus de .vi^{c}.
et se vous viennent assaillir
bien nous devra chascuns hair
et diffamer par mahommet
se nous · qui sommes en sommet
de ceste monteingne logie
bien avisie et bien rengie
a si grans gent · que nostre page
les devroient sans avantage
enchacier · tuer · et occire
sil nous pooit desconfire
et si nous deveroit on pendre
avant signeur or dou deffendre
car qui bien se deffendera
au jour dui mes amis sera

And made three battle lines
Of men who were in no way worthless,
But were rather, as well I know,
Honorable and virtuous men, one and all.
The prince commanded the first line
And had carried before him the banner
Of Our Lady because this image
Is beautiful and good, gracious and worthy.
Brémont led the second group.
There was no man in the world
Who could command them better,
Nor who would be as pleased by the task.
Lesparre was in charge of the third,
Which he led and commanded wisely.
Now I intend telling the tale.
Our men could not scale
The heights before them in any way
Save from three directions alone,
For there were three passages only
Facing the castle, and quite narrow,
Between the old walls and terraces.
Just a few open spaces were all there were.
Our army sallied forth into the open
And formed up on the plain.
The prince took the left wing,
Lesparre took the one on the right,
While Brémont held the one in the center,
For by right this should be his
Since there was none other.
And when the Caraman saw them
Formed up in such array,
He said: "Surely these people
I see are mad, insane.
They number no more than six hundred,
And yet make to attack you!
By Mohammed, we should be despised
And ridiculed by every man
If we who hold the high ground
And are ensconced on this mountain,
Well disciplined and well disposed,
And so numerous that our pages
Should be able without reinforcements
To rout, kill, and slay them
—If he can defeat us,
We should all be hung.
Forward, lords, and defend yourselves!
This day I'll hold dear
The man who is skilled in defense."

Or est raisons que je vous conte
dou caraman .i. petit conte
je vous di bien quil na signeur
en turquie de li gringneur
ne qui face tant a doubter
de tous se fait trop fort doubter
cest uns homs de trop grant emprise
dont maint homme le loe et prise
plus est hardis que nuls lions
moult seroit or vaillans li homs
et bien de lespee ferroit
qui corps a corps le conquerroit
quant nos gents furent seur le mont
tous ensamble montez amont
il se meirent comme uns murs
entre les engins et les turs
et les veoient vis a vis
adont parla ce mest avis
li bons princes que dieus confort
et sa gent amonnestoit fort
quil fussent preudomme et vaillant cccxliiiR
et quil ne fussent pas faillant
a ce besong · car qui fuiroit
vraiement il se destruiroit
car il ne saroit pas lusage
ne dou pais ne dou langage
et si ne saroit ou fuir
bremons et lesparre ensievir
en tous cas le prince voloient
et a leurs gens einsi disoient
chascuns le sien amonnestoit
de bien faire · et mestiers estoit
car qui la vaillans ne sera
jamais honneur ne lamera
et si perdra tous les biens fais
quen toute sa vie ara fais
li turc furent en grant effroy
quant il veirent le conroy
de nos gens · et se mervilloient
quengiens ne garros ne doubtoient
pierres · saiettes · nautres trais
dont on leur a .c^{m}. trais
trompes · naquaires · et tabours
sonnoient si fort que li bours
et la mer en restentissoit
de la noise qui en yssoit
paour avoient et doubtance
et ni avoit nulle ordenance
eins estoient en maintes pars

Now it is right that I tell you
A little about the Caraman.
I say to you that in Turkey
There is no lord greater,
Or who does so many terrible things
He makes all fear him greatly.
He's a man of quite impressive might,
For which many a man praises and esteems him.
He's braver than any lion.
It would be a quite valiant man,
And he should ably deal out swordstrokes
Were he to defeat him hand to hand.
When our forces had scaled
The mountain, had all climbed up,
They made a formation like a wall
Between the siege engines and the Turks.
There they looked upon them face to face.
Then, I believe, the good prince
Made a speech—may God comfort him!
He strongly encouraged his men
To be valiant and brave warriors
And not prove failures
At this task; for whoever took flight
Would be in fact sealing his own fate,
For he would be ignorant of the customs
And the language of this country,
And thus not know where to flee.
Brémont and Lesparre intended,
No matter what happened, to follow the prince.
And said as much to their men.
Every one encouraged his fellow
To do well—which was necessary,
For honor would never befriend
The man who failed to be valiant
And thereby he would lose all the renown
He had gained in his whole life.
The Turks were quite terrified
When they saw our men
In formation, marveled that they
Did not fear the catapults or engines,
The stones, arrows, and other shot
Rained down on them by the hundred thousands.
Our men made noise with drums large
And small so fiercely that the city
And the ocean resounded therefore.
Because of the noise this made,
They became frightened and fearful,
And they were not formed up
But rather scattered in many places

par dessus la montaingne espars
pluseurs montoient a cheval
li autre descendoient le val
qui estoit par devers la terre
ni a celui qui ne sesserre
tentes · pavillons destendoient
et sambloient qualer sen voloient
et nos gens estoient tout quoy
et vesci les raisons pour quoy
conseil neurent pas a ceste heure
quil leur alassent courir seure
li pluseurs estoient blecie
et sestoient trestuit a pie
et si estoient moult foulez
dou chaut · et pesamment armez
car chaut faisoit a desmesure
dessus la roche haute et dure
de leurs pavillons de leurs tentes
avoient gaingnie ne say quantes
et leur place et tous leurs engiens
et aussi pluseurs de leurs biens
sen disoient ja dieu ne place
quil nous chassent de ceste place
einsois nous les enchasserons
ou a eaus nous combaterons

Quant le caraman vit comment
nos gens se tiennent fermement
et quautrement ne chasseront
ne de la ne se partiront
a son pooir se ralia
et a haute vois sescria
avant signeurs se bien ferons
certes tous les desconfirons
il sont lasses et ne sont gaires
sonnez cors · trompes · et naquaires
afin que chascuns se ralie
adont une moult grant partie
des sarrazins qui sen aloient
au caraman se ralioient
samblant de combatre feirent
et en bataille se meirent
mais po de talent en avoient
et tout le contraire pensoient
or vueil devisier leur maniere
quant il veirent la baniere
de nostre dame · et la bataille
dou prince · il alerent sans faille
celle part moult apertement

Beneath the heights.
Some mounted their horses;
Other descended into the valley
That opened in front of the plain.
Not a one didn't take flight;
They struck their tents and pavilions;
It appeared they were eager to retreat.
And our men remained where they were,
And here are the reasons why.
They had not determined to
Move forward against the enemy at this time.
Many of our troops had been wounded,
And all were on foot,
And they were very much oppressed
By the heat and were heavily armed,
Because the heat was beyond measure
Above that high, hard, rocky place.
They had captured I don't know how many
Of their pavilions and tents,
And their position and all their artillery,
And also some of their goods.
And in this regard they said: "May it never please God
That they drive us from this place;
Either we will beat them off,
Or we will make a fight of it against them."

When the Caraman saw how
Our men were holding firm,
And otherwise not giving chase,
Nor would they leave the place
—He did his best to rally the army
And cried out in a very loud voice:
"Forward, lords! If we strike well,
We will surely be their destruction.
They are tired and few.
Let the horns, trumpets, and drums be sounded
To make every man rally together."
At this a very great number
Of the Saracens who were in retreat
Stood fast beside the Caraman.
They made as if they would fight
And formed themselves into a line of battle,
Yet they had little eagerness for the task
And wished in fact to do the opposite.
Now I will relate what they did.
When they saw the banner
Of Our Lady and the prince's
Formation, they advanced without hesitation
In that direction quite readily,

joint et serre et tellement
quil deust a chascun sambler
qua li vosissent assambler
et si tost quil estoient pres cccxliiiV 5485
il sen retournoient ades
et li princes ne se mouvoit
de sa bataille · einsois tenoit
espee en sa main toute nue
et chascuns lance ou besague 5490
archiers · arbalestriers traioient
de toutes pars quan quil pooient
pluseurs fois feirent ce tour
quades faisoient leur retour
et sans cop ferir se partoient 5495
nautre damage ne faisoient
mais noise faisoient si grant
quon ni oist dieu tonnant
leur cheval estoient couvert
lun de jaune et lautre de vert 5500
de moult estranges couvertures
et de sauvages pourtraitures

Li jour passa et la nuit vint
moult espesse · dont il avint
quil furent tuit esvanuy 5505
et le caraman sen fuy
nostre gent apres eaus alerent
et grant damage leur porterent
quil se ferirent en la queue
mais la nuit qui est noire et bleue 5510
les fist par force departir
et retourner · la departir
maintes colees veissiez
et maint mort se vous y fussiez
la ot mervilleuse meslee 5515
la ot feru maint cop despee
la ot grant hui et grant debat
li caramans fort se combat
car il faisoit larriere garde
mais il en fera maise garde 5520
et si nen rendera ja conte
qui ne soit a sa tres grant honte
et li bons prince dautre part
qui rutez cops donne et depart
chascuns le fait bien endroit soy 5525
pour sonneur garder et sa loy
bremons et lesparre · et leur gent
y venirent isnellement
pour eaus decoper et chassier

Drawn up in ranks and in a way
That should signal to every man
Their intention to join battle with him.
And just as they drew close,
They soon began to retreat.
And the prince did not move
From his line of battle, gripped instead
A naked sword in his hand,
As every man did his lance or battleaxe.
Archers and arbalesters let fly
From every direction as much as they could.
Several times the enemy made the same maneuver,
Retreating suddenly after advancing,
Withdrawing before striking a blow
Or doing any other damage.
Yet they made such a noise
No one could have heard God's thunder.
Their horses were arrayed,
One in yellow, and the other in green,
With quite strange blankets,
And exotic decorations.

The day passed and night fell
With great darkness, and it happened
That they all vanished,
And the Caraman took flight.
Our men did pursue them
And did great harm with an attack
On the rear of their column.
But the night, which is dark and black,
Forced them to break off
And return. There you would
Have seen many a blow delivered,
And many a dead man—had you been present.
There the battle was marvelous,
There many a sword blow was struck,
There many cries and angry shouts were heard.
The Caraman fought fiercely,
For he acted as the rearguard,
But he defended the column ineptly
And will never be able to render
An accounting that's not to his great shame.
And the good prince was on the other side,
Who dealt and delivered many a savage blow.
Each man beside him did the same
To protect his honor and religion.
Brémont and Lesparre and their men
Came up with dispatch
To massacre and punish them.

chascuns tint le bon branc dacier
si les affolent et mehaingnent
et tuent tous ceuls quil ataingnent
si fierement leur courent seure
quil ont tant fait quen petit deure
li turc se meirent en fuie
ni a celui qui ne sen fuy
et li caramans sen fui
qui le pot sievrre il le sievy
et tuit li signeur de turquie
ni a celui qui se ralie
eins se meirent a la voie
grant et petit · que vous diroie
li champs au prince demoura
qui en occist et acoura
plus de .x. milliers en la place
mais certes ce fu par la grace
de dieu le pere · quautrement
ne peust estre bonnement
einsi fu li chastiaus rescous
des turs · qui sen fuirent tous
nonques puis ni ot si hardi
qui neust cuer acouardi
ne qui osast porter dommage
au gentil roy · na son barnage
et leurs messages envoierent
par devers lui · si sacorderent
si bien · quencor ont bonne pais
vraiement ce fu uns grans fais
mais je ne say pas vraiement
se la pais dura longuement

Li crestien se sont retrait
tout belement et tout a trait
les pavillons et les engiens
tout le charroy et tous les biens
que li turc avoient laissie
ont trouve · si les ont chergie
et mene dedens le chastel cccxliiiiR
a grant joie et a grant revel
par mi le lieu sont retourne
ou lesquermuche avoit este
les mors ont pris et recueillis
si les ont tous ensevelis
et les ont mis en terre sainte
la ot il ploure larme mainte
la fu pleins et regretez mont
messires philippes domont
et .i. escuier bel et bon

Each man brandished a sword of fine steel,
So they undid and cut down
And killed every man they reached.
So fiercely did they assault them
That in a short time they succeeded
In putting the Turks to flight.
Not a one did not run away.
And the Caraman fled too;
Whoever was able to follow followed him.
And of all the Turkish nobles
Not one made a stand;
Instead all took to the road,
The grand and humble alike. What to tell you?
The field belonged to the prince,
Who killed and slaughtered
More than ten thousand in that place.
Yet surely this was by the grace of God
The Father because otherwise
Things could not have turned out so happily.
In this way the fortress was rescued
From the Turks, who all fled.
No one among them was so brave
He did not come to have a coward's heart,
Nor dared again to trouble
The noble king or his lords,
And to him the enemy sent ambassadors,
And both sides agreed
So readily they had afterward a good peace.
Truly this was a grand accomplishment.
Yet I do not know for a fact
If the peace will last long.

The Christians drew back
In fine form and proper order.
They found the pavilions
And the artillery, all the baggage
And the goods that the Turks
Had abandoned; so these they loaded up
And brought inside the castle
With great joy and celebration.
They returned through the place
Where the skirmish had been.
There they collected and took up their dead,
And afterward buried them all
And put them in holy ground.
There they wept many a tear.
There was much sighing and grieving
Over my lord Philippe d'Aumont,
And a virtuous and able squire

quon appelloit bonan · de bon
qui fu pris de ses bons amis
pleins · plourez et en terre mis
et tous les autres ensement
bien et bel et devotement

Quant li mort furent enterre
et tuit li navre deferre
des viretons et de saiettes
que li turc leur avoient traites
et que leurs plaies remuees
furent lavees et bendees
le prince et sa gent reposerent
quonques turc ne si opposerent
car tuit avoient fait la vuide
sages est qui si a point vuide
car mort estoient vraiement
sil heussent fait autrement
la demoura .iii. jours entiers
le prince · et le fist volentiers
pour ce quemmener ne pooit
les navrez chascuns le veoit
et si atendoit les galees
quen chypre estoient alees
au tiers jour vint le tricoplier
qui nosast penser ne cuidier
que nostre gent einsi peussent
les turs enchacier ne dehussent
il arriva sus la gravelle
et on li conta la nouvelle
dont moult grant joie demena
tantost au prince le mena
uns chevaliers qui la estoit
qui sus la greve sesbatoit
quant le prince venir le vit
mout tres bonne chiere li fit
et moult li demanda dou roy
et sil faisoit aucun arroy
pour eaus secourre et conforter
le tricoplier prist a jurer
quil faisoit si grant appareil
que piessa ne vit le pareil
et quant li princes lentendi
tout en leure li respondi
je lo et conseil quon li mande
que son armee contremande
et que li turq sont desconfit
a sonneur et a son profit
et lors li conta la besongne

Who was named Bonau de Bon;
And he was borne by his good friends,
Wept over, mourned, and put under the earth.
And all the others were too,
Properly and fittingly and devoutly.

After the dead had been buried
And all the wounded had pulled from their flesh
The iron heads of the arrows and bolts
The Turks had shot them with,
And their wounds had been changed,
Washed, and bound up,
The prince and his men took their rest,
For never did the Turks oppose this
Since all of them had in truth vanished.
Wise is the man who flees at such times
Because they would have been killed
Had they done otherwise.
The prince remained in that place
Three days, did so willingly,
Because the wounded could not
Be taken along; every man saw this
And so he waited for the galleys
That had gone on to Cyprus.
On the third day the turcoplier arrived,
Who did not dare think or hope
That our men could or should have put to flight
The Turks in such a fashion.
He disembarked at the beach,
And the news was told him,
And it gave him great joy.
At once a knight who was there
And who was disporting himself
On the shore took him to the prince.
When he saw him coming,
The prince heartily welcomed the man
And asked very much after the king
And if he had made any arrangements
To relieve and reinforce them.
The turcoplier began to affirm
That he had assembled a force
Whose like he had never seen before.
And when the prince heard these tidings,
He answered at once:
"I advise and counsel that someone tell him
That he muster out his men
And that the Turks have been defeated
To both his honor and profit."
And then he recounted his accomplishment,

et aussi chascuns le tesmongne
com gens qui avoient grant glorie
davoir si tres noble victoire

Quant il furent bien repose
et li navre mieux dispose
le prince et toute la brigade
grant et petit · sain et malade
monterent dedens les galees
que le tricoplier amenees
avoit de chypre · et sen alerent
mais tres bonnes gardes laissierent
eu chastel et en la fortresse
puis preirent la droite adresse
vers la cite de famagouste
et a qui quil grieve ne couste
il sont arrivez au droit port
a grant joie et a grant deport

Quant li roys vit sa gent venir
il ne se pot onques tenir
qua lencontre ne leur alast
et les degrez ne desvalast
de son palais tant desiroit cccxliiiiV
les nouvelles quon li diroit
car il doubtoit moult la vaillance
dou caraman et sa puissance
et ce quil avoit tant de gens
que contre un estoient .ii. cens
voire encor plus a mon cuidier
et dont bien se pooit aidier
quant li roys le prince a veu
moult liement la receu
et tous ceus qui o li estoient
qui de la besongne venoient
li princes en palais monta
et de chief en chief li conta
de lesquermuche et leur emprise
comment la montaingne fu prise
et comment leurs engiens gaingnierent
et dedens courc les amenerent
leurs pavillons et leurs harnois
ne la vaillance dune nois
naporterent quil ne perdissent
trestout · et quil ne sen fuissent
quant tout li ot dit et conte
et li roys lot bien escoute
dieu loa et li fist grant chiere
et pour ceaus qui gisent en biere

And everyone present bore witness also,
In the manner of men who possess much glory
In achieving such a noble victory.

When they had rested well
And the wounded were seen to in the best way
The prince and all his force,
Great and humble, fit and wounded alike
Embarked into the galleys
That the turcoplier had brought
From Cyprus and departed the place.
But they left behind a very able garrison
In the castle and stronghold.
Then they made straight
For the city of Famagusta.
And no matter who was bothered or pained,
They arrived at their home port
With great joy and much celebration.

When he saw his people coming,
The king could not hold back at all
From going forward to greet them,
And he vaulted down the steps
Of his palace, so eagerly did he desire
The news he was to hear.
For he feared greatly the valor
And the might of the Caraman,
And that he had so many men
That it was two hundred against one,
Truly, even more, I believe,
And with these he could readily help himself.
When the king saw the prince,
He welcomed with great joy
The man and all those with him,
Who were returning from the mission.
The prince went up to the palace,
Where he told him from beginning to end
Everything about the skirmish and accomplishment:
How the heights were seized,
How they captured their artillery
Which they brought down to Gorhigos,
Along with their pavilions and gear,
Nor did they take away more than
A nut's worth of goods that they did not utterly
Lose and then they fled.
After he related and told him everything
And the king had listened well,
He praised God and showed him a pleasant demeanor,
And for those men now lying in their graves

fist prier dieu devotement
et dire messes hautement
or vous ay dit bien le savez
comment li sieges fu levez
si revenray a ma matiere
pour ce quelle soit toute entiere
et vous diray de point en point
si que je nen mentiray point
ce que les amiraus traiterent
avec le roy et ordenerent
car certeinnement mal feroie
sa dire les vous oublioie
premiers vous diray le traitie
quil ont acorde et traitie
je vous di tout premierement
quil acorderent telement
que tous les prisons dalixandre
que li bon roys fist prist ou fist prendre
quant elle fu prise et conquise
leur renderoit par tele guise
que li soudans li renderoit
tous les crestiens que pris tenoit

Apres ce fu dit et traitie
que li rois aroit la moitie
en tout le profit dou commerque
que marchandise paie et merque
commerque est imposition
et sachiez quen la region
de toute surie et degypte
na cite ne ville petite
son y marchande qui ne paie
de .x. deniers .i. cest la paie
quon paie tout communement
par tout · et especiaument
a sur · a baruch · a sajette
a alixandre · a damiette
a triple · et en jherusalem
et a damas le paie len
de ce .xme. nuls neschape
tant ait grant cote ou longue chape
car chascuns y va a loffrande
dou quil soit · puis quil marcheande

Le tiers poins qui fu en la pais
fu a trop grant peinne parfais
car il fu forment debatus
promis · escris · et rabatus
et nompourquant il fu passez

He arranged that devout prayers to God
And high masses should be said.
Now I have already described—as well you know
—How the siege was lifted.
And so I'll return to my theme
In order to bring it to a conclusion.
And I'll tell you in full detail
So that I lie about nothing concerning
What the admirals negotiated
And decided upon with the king,
For certainly I would be wrong
To neglect recounting these things to you.
First I will speak about the treaty
That they negotiated and drafted.
I'll tell in the first place
They came to an agreement
That all the prisoners from Alexandria
Whom the good king took or had taken
When the city was captured and conquered
Were to be returned to them in the event
That the sultan would release
To the king all the Christians he had seized.

Afterward it was assented to and discussed
That the king would have half
Of all profits from the "commerque"
That merchant companies pay and render.
The "commerque" is a tax,
And you should know that in the region
Of all of Syria and Egypt
There's no city or even small village
Where trade is conducted that one penny
Is not paid on every ten; this is the rate
That is paid in common by all
Throughout the region and especially
At Tyre, Beirut, and Antioch,
At Alexandria and Sidon;
At Tripoli and in Jerusalem
And Damascus it is also paid.
No one avoids this tenth-tax,
However big his coat or long his cape,
But instead every man pays up
Wherever he is from as long as he does business.

The third point of the treaty
Was drawn up only with much difficulty
Because it was much debated,
Agreed upon, then written down, and later struck off.
Nonetheless it was passed.

je croy quoy avez assez
quil na crestien en tout le monde
puis quil passe la mer parfonde
pour faire le tres saint voiage
quau soudan ne paie treuage
car de .v. florins de florence
rachete son chief sans doubtance
li roys moult grant courrous en a cccxlvR
pour ce fist tant quon ordena
que des or mais chascuns iroit
franchement et quittes seroit
mais quil heust lettres de lui
nil nen vuet excepter nelui
einsois vuet que chascuns y aille
sans paier ne denier ne maille

Li quars poins fu moult glorieus
moult dignes et moult precieus
ce fu de la sainte columpne
ou jhesu cris o sa coronne
fu batus · ferus · et lyez
einsois quil fust crucefiez
qui est moult petitement mise
de jherusalem en leglise
ou miracles faisoit jadis
les amiraus et li cadis
ont jure quil lenvoieroient
en famagouste ou il estoient
au bon roy qui tant la desire
que je ne le saroie dire
car sil la il nen penroit mie
tout lavoir qui est en surie
eins la mettra si richement
et si tres honnourablement
que doutre la mer dengleterre
la venront pelerin requerre
encore a il entention
de faire par devotion
une chapelle belle et gente
ou chanoines ara et rente
ou la columpne metera
et avec ce il pourchassera
tant par devers nostre saint pere
que sil est ainsi quil appere
quaucuns ait promise la voie
au saint sepulchre · il li ottroie
quil face son pelerinage
a la columpne et son voiage
et quil soit quittes et absos

I believe you have heard
That there is no Christian in all the world
Who when he traverses the ocean deep
In order to make the very holy voyage
Avoids paying tribute to the sultan.
For with five Florentine florins
He must without fail redeem his head.
The king was quite angry about this.
And so he argued it should be ordained
That henceforth anyone holding letters
From him should travel freely
And be quit of the tribute.
And there should be no exceptions
Because he wished everyone to go there
Without paying even a single penny or less.

The fourth point concerned something
Quite glorious, very worthy, and rather valuable.
And this was the holy column
Where Jesus Christ with his crown
Was tied, struck, and whipped
Before he was crucified,
Which then was quite humbly housed
In one of Jerusalem's churches
Where miracles had occurred in ancient times.
The admirals and the cadises
Swore that they would send it over
To Famagusta—where they were
—To the good king who desired it so much
I haven't the words to describe it,
For he would find its possession more valuable
Than all the riches Syria contains;
In fact, he would house the column so richly
And with such great dignity
That from beyond the English sea
Pilgrims would come to seek it out.
Moreover, it was his wish
To construct through his devotion
A worthy and noble chapel,
With canons and a living,
Where he would install the column.
And in addition he would ask
Our holy father the pope
(Should this come to pass)
That anyone with permission to visit
The Holy Sepulchre would be allowed
To make his pilgrimage
And his visit to the column instead;
And that this should make him quit and absolved

soit grans petis · sages · ou fos
se li soudans empeschement
il metoit · et non autrement
et pluseurs autres couvenances
dont il feirent ordenances
mais en bonne foy vous plevi
que je ne les say pas ne vi

Quant la pais fu bien acordee
promise · ottroye · et juree
dou roy · et des .ii. amiraus
il dist devant leurs .ii. consaus
seigneurs toute raison sacorde
que ceste pais et ceste acorde
soit publiee par la terre
dou soudan sans alongne querrre
et je la feray publier
en mon pais sans detrier
moult volentiers par quoy les nostres
puissent aler avec les vostres
et les vostres paisiblement
veingnent dessa seurement
par quoy marcheandise queure
quavis mest se dieux me sequeure
que cest deffaus en toute court
quant marcheandise ne court
il a seans .i. chevalier
quon appelle le tricoplier
le plus sage et le plus notable
qui soit en ce pais sans fable
et sa saiens .iiii. personnes
notables · souffissans et bonnes
les .ii. sont au roy darragon
qui ce traitie tiennent pour bon
quacorde lont tout dune vois
aussi vesci .ii. genevois
dont les noms ne vueil pas celer
sachiez quil se font appeller
monsigneur jehan imperial
qui a le cuer franc et loyal
lautre a nom a ce corps ynel cccxlvV
messires pierre raguenel
tuit ont este a ce conseil
et pour ce je lo et conseil
quil sen voisent avec vous
de par leur roy et de par nous
le tricoplier envoieray
avec eaus · et bien li diray
quau soudan le die et requiere

Whether he was grand or humble, fool or sage
—If the sultan put obstacles
In his path and not otherwise.
And there were other points
That they made part of the treaty,
But my pledge in good faith is that these
I know not and never looked upon.

When peace had been agreed upon,
Promised, granted, and sworn to
By the king and the two admirals,
He said in the presence of their two counselors:
"Lords, it seems eminently reasonable
That this treaty and agreement
Be published throughout the land
Of the sultan without looking for any delay.
And I in turn will arrange that it be
Published without any hindrance in my country,
Quite willingly too, so that our people
May travel along with yours,
And your people in peace and safety
May make their way to this side
So that trade will flow
Since, so help me God, it seems
To be a problem in every court
When buying and selling are not conducted.
There is a knight here present
Called the turcoplier,
The wisest and worthiest man
Who is in this land—and that is no lie.
And also here present are four men
Who are famous, accomplished, and virtuous.
Two are from the king of Aragon,
And they consider the treaty a good one,
Having endorsed it with a single voice.
There are also two Genoese
Whose names I will not conceal.
Know that they are called
My lord Jean Imperial,
With a generous and loyal heart,
And the other my lord
Pierre Raguenel, who is quick of body.
All attended these deliberations,
And so I counsel and advise
That they go with you,
Acting for their kings and for us.
I will send the turcoplier
With them, and I will carefully instruct him
To inform the sultan and ask

et que lacort en tel maniere
jure · com nous lavons jure
et par nos fois asseure
en mon pais a mil esclaves
qui furent en celiers en caves
pris · a la prise dalixandre
je li vueil renvoier · et rendre
en signe de pais et de joie
par tel couvent quil me renvoie
tous les crestiens quil a pris
et arrestez en son pais
et quil leur rende leur avoir
quel part quon le porra savoir
les .ii. amiraus lacorderent
et le scens de lui moult prisierent
li roys le tricoplier manda
et au partir li commanda
et li dist sa volente toute
et se parti de famagouste
et les mil esclavez o li
qui sen vont a cuer moult joly
car tuit cuidoient estre mort
sans repas de honteuse mort
les amiraus les conduisoient
et vers le soudan les menoient
or ramaint dieux le tricoplier
car il vorroit estre templier
ou plus parfont lieu dalemaigne
ou de prusse · einsois quil revengne
il avoit de bons chevaliers
et de notables escuiers
riches gens et de grant arroy
en la compaingnie dou roy
qui moult humblement li prierent
par pluseurs fois et supplierent
quaveques les embassadeurs
qui de la pais furent traiteurs
peussent aler pour veoir
le quaire · et le pais · quespoir
par le sepulchre revenroient
car grant devotion avoient
de tous les sains lieus viseter
mais li roys nel volt acorder
qua monsigneur guy le baveux
.i. francois moult chevalereus
et a .ii. enfans quil avoit
dont chascuns chevaliers estoit
hardi estoient et preudomme
vesci leurs noms je les vous nomme

That he swear to the agreement
The same oath sworn by us,
Who have made a pledge on our faith.
In my land are a thousand slaves
Who have been in caves and cellars,
And they were captured at the taking of Alexandria,
And them I intend giving over and sending
To him as a sign of peace and happiness,
On the condition he send me in return
All the Christians he has taken prisoner
And detained in his own lands,
And that he give back their possessions
Wherever it is learned these might be."
The two admirals agreed,
And they greatly praised his wisdom.
The king sent for the turcoplier
And as he departed spoke
And told him all that he wanted.
And so he left Famagusta
Along with the thousand slaves,
Who set out with a happy heart,
For they had all expected to die
Without reprieve a shameful death.
The admirals escorted
And conducted them to the sultan.
Now may God return the turcoplier!
For he should rather become a Templar
In the farthest reaches of Germany
Or Prussia before he might come back!
There were some worthy knights
And valued squires,
Rich men, and of high rank too
In the king's company
Who begged him quite humbly
Many times, asked for leave
To sail with the ambassadors
Who were to negotiate the peace,
So that they might look upon
Cairo and the surrounding lands; for perhaps
They could return by way of the Sepulcher
Since they had a great devotion
To visit all the holy places.
But the king gave leave only to
My lord Gui le Baveux,
A very chivalrous Frenchman
And the two sons he had,
Each of whom was a knight.
Brave men they were, and worthy warriors.
Here are their names, I say them for you.

li uns avoit a nom robert
qui nestoit rude ne trubert
et jodouin le bouviller
se fait li autres appeller
encor vous di je que li rois
donna congie a .i. anglois
cest messires robers li rous
qui est fors · puissans · et estous
et en armes preus et legiers
et si avoit .ii. escuiers
a cui li roys abandonna
laler · et congie leur donna
li uns avoit nom jehan de coutes
qui congnoissoit les honneurs toutes
li autres jehan se clamoit
de biauviller qui moult amoit
armes · honneur · honneste vie
et croy quil avoit belle amie

Mais je nay pas la raison dit
pour quoy li roys a escondit
pluseurs de sa chevalerie
daler vers la gent renoye
de ses gens a toudis afaire cccxlviR
et sil les tenoient au quaire
il sont si plain de desraison
de faussete · de traison
quil seroient trop mal venus
se deaus estoient retenus
et sen porroit estre son fait
gastez de tous poins et deffait
ou on les porroit tous tuer
et en la riviere ruer
dont li nobles roys derveroit
de dueil · qui einsi le feroit
pour ce ne vueil que nuls y voise
car le peril voit bien et poise

En chypre avoit .i. escuier
quon devroit mettre et estuier
droitement eu sige donnour
car riens ne het fors deshonnour
il aimme armes et amours
et dames · la sont ses clamours
et sest courtois et honnourables
larges · loiaus · et amiables
hardis · vaillans · frans et gentils
en tous cas sages et soutils
et quant il a la teste armee

The first was called Robert,
A man neither uncouth nor a scoundrel;
And the other one was called
Joudoin de Biauvillier.
In addition, the king, I tell you,
Gave leave to an Englishman,
This was Robert the Red, who is
Strong, powerful, and unyielding
And able with and skilled at arms.
And there were two squires
Whom the king allowed
To go and gave them leave.
The first was called Jean de Coutes,
A man acquainted with every honor.
The other was named Jean
De Biauvillier, who loved arms,
Honor, and honest living very much,
And I believe he had a pretty lady.

But I have not yet revealed the reason
Why the king forbid
Many among his company
To travel to that renegade people.
His concern was always for his men.
And if these people held them in Cairo,
They were full of caprice,
Falseness, and treachery.
Thus they would be quite badly received
If kept prisoner by them;
And then the king's purpose would be
Thwarted and frustrated completely.
Or they might even all be killed
And thrown into the river;
He would have driven the noble king mad
With grief, whoever did this to him.
And so he did not wish any man to go,
For he saw clearly a danger and worried about it.

In Cyprus was a squire
Who truly should be assigned
And installed in the seat of honor
Since he hates nothing but shame.
He loves arms and love
And ladies too; these demand his attention.
And so he's courteous and honorable,
Generous, trustworthy, and friendly,
Brave, valiant, generous, and noble,
Wise and intelligent at all times.
And when his head is armed,

si bien scet ferir de lespee
et si tres bien sen scet aidier
quon ne porroit mieux souhaidier
on lapelle jehan de reins
qui donneur porte tous les reins
daler au quaire supplia
le roy · mais escondit li a
ne pour riens que faire peust
ne pot faire quau roy pleust
et quant li bons jehans ce vit
oiez comment il se chevit
la ot .i. chevalier de gennes
qui portoit dasur .iiii. kannes
si pres de luevre de nature
comme on les puet faire en pointure
et cestoit li uns des messages
qui moult estoit preudons et sages
jehans de reins a li traita
tant li fist et tant esploita
et si sagement se contint
quen sa galee le retint
et le tenoit de sa famille
ne fu ce maniere soutille
quen babyloinne le mena
seurement et ramena
cils jehans dont je vous parole
maprent et menseingne · et mescole
et mamenistre ma matiere
car il vit toute la maniere
de courc · dou quaire · et dalixandre
et de triple · et si fu au prendre

Lan mil .ccc. .lxvi.
se partirent ce mest avis
li messagier a tout leur route
de la cite de famagouste
le .xiiii[e]. jour de mars
mais qui donnast .c. mille mars
aus esclaves se dieux me voie
il neussent pas si grant joie
comme il avoient dou retour
oubliee estoit leur tristour
quil savoient pour verite
quen alixandre la cite
les devoit li bons roys livrer
et frans et quites delivrer
mais li roys a bien commande
au tricoplier quil a mande
que par jherusalem revengne

He can strike so well with the sword
And can handle himself so ably
No one could hope for better.
He's called Jean de Reims,
Who wears all the rings of honor.
He begged the king for permission
To go to Cairo but was refused
Despite all he had been able to do
Or could do to please the king.
And hear what the virtuous Jean
Did when he saw this.
There was a knight from Gennes
Who wore four ducks of azure,
And these as close to Nature's handiwork
As any painter can make them;
And he was one of the messengers,
Who was a very worthy man and wise too.
Jean de Reims entreated him,
Did so much and conducted himself so ably,
And acted so craftily that this man
Found him a place in his galley
And counted him a member of the household.
Nor was this in a subtle fashion
That he took Jean to Babylon
And then home again in safety.
This Jean of whom I speak
Taught, instructed, and informed me,
And provided me my material.
For he was a witness to everything
In Gorhigos, in Cairo, in Alexandria,
And in Tripoli, and he was present at its conquest.

In the year thirteen sixty-six,
The messengers, I believe,
Along with all their company left behind
The city of Famagusta
The fourteenth day of March.
But if someone had given the slaves
A hundred thousand marks, so God guide me,
They would not have been as joyful
As they were about their return.
Forgotten was their sadness
Since they knew for a fact
That the good king was to
Deliver them to the city of Alexandria
And hand them over free and clear.
But the king had carefully instructed
The turcoplier—whom he sent
—To return by Jerusalem

et que la sainte escharpe prengne
et que seur toute rien se garde
que bien seurement la garde
car tant laimme et tant la desire
quil nen penroit mie lempire
de romme ou de coustentinoble
tant est relique digne et noble
brief il nen penroit nul avoir
sainsi est quil la puist avoir

Par mer sen vont li messagier cccxlviV
qui ne finerent de nagier
tant quil sont venu a bon port
a grant joie et a grant deport
et se vous di qua bien esmer
na que .v^c^. .m. de mer
de chypre jusquen alixandre
et la alerent il descendre
le jour de feste nostre dame
en mars · sans perdre homme ne fame
et fu tout droit selon mentente
lan mil .ccc. sept et sexante
eins que li ans renouvelle
si vous diray autre nouvelle
et si feray .i. incident
pour .i. mervilleux accident
qui adonques avint au quaire
pour le traitie rompre et deffaire

Or est raison que je vous die
quen temps de la messagerie
qui fu faite des amiraus
et du cadix qui est si faus
quil na de nulle raison cure
au caire avint une aventure
que je ne vueil pas oublier
eins la vueil dire et publier
au caire avoit .i. amiral
vuit de tout bien · plein de tout mal
qui estoit sages et soutils
et a tout mal faire ententis
des mauvais estoit tous li pires
et des autres amiraus sires
et avoit le gouvernement
dou soudan tout entierement
de son regne et de son pais
et si estoit daucuns hais
car on avoit moult grant envie

And take the holy column,
And that he should take pains above all else
To guard it very securely.
Because he esteemed and wanted it so much
He in no way would have accepted
The empires of Rome or Constantinople in exchange,
So noble and worthy is the relic.
In short, he would be interested
In no other possession should it thus become his.

The messengers sailed across the sea
Who never halted in their journey
Until they arrived at a safe harbor
With great joy and much celebration.
And I say that a good estimate would be
That there's only five hundred miles of sea
From Cyprus to Alexandria.
And there they made to disembark
On the feast day of Our Lady,
In March, with no man or woman lost.
And this was right at the beginning,
So I understand, of the year thirteen sixty-seven,
Just before new year comes.
And I've other news to tell you
And will relate something of note
About an incredible event in fact
That transpired then in Cairo
In order to break and void the treaty.

Now it's fitting I inform you
That at the time of the embassy
That was undertaken by the two admirals
And the cadis—a man so false
He cares nothing for the truth
—Something happened in Cairo
I cannot pass over in silence
But intend to relate and make public.
In Cairo was an admiral
Empty of any virtue, full of every vice,
Who was wise and cunning,
And eager to commit every kind of crime.
Of evil men he was the worst,
And the chief of the other admirals,
And he acted as regent
For the sultan in every matter
Pertaining to his kingdom and lands.
And so he was hated by some,
For he was envied greatly

de son estat et de sa vie
son nom pas ne vous celeray
einsois le vous exposeray
irbouga estoit appellez
et se mieux savoir le volez
cest yeux de buef en droit francois
et si avoit .i. genevois
qui deust ore estre noiez
car faus estoit et renoiez
devenus estoit sarrazins
et savoit a non nassardins
amiraus et grans druguement
estoit dou soudan · et briefment
ces .ii. avoient entrepris
a destruire le roy de pris
qui de chypre a la signourie
or vous diray la renardie
la traison la mauvaitie
quil avoient fait et traitie
quelle ne doit estre celee
eins doit bien estre revelee

Vous avez oy et tenu
de la pais tout le contenu
que jay ci devant recite
si que sachiez en verite
que fait lavoient faussement
et tres malicieusement
estoit ceste pais pourpensee
et vesci toute leur pensee
il ne pooient recouvrer
pour penser ne pour labourer
le grant damage et la grant perte
qui a tous estoit toute aperte
comment alixandre fu prise
et la menue gent occise
si ne se pooient vangier
dou roy · tant com li estrangier
et les gens darmes le servissent
et sil avenoit quil partissent
quant li roys bonne pais verroit
nulles gens darmes ne tenroit
dont il porroit estre honnis
car sil nestoit de gens garnis
ses gens de chipre ne porroient cccxlviiR
riens encontre euls sil y venoient
einsi cuident le roy destruire
quant il verront leur queue luire

Because of his position and rank.
I'll not keep secret his name,
But rather reveal it to you.
Yalbogha he was called,
And if you want to know him better,
That's "yeux de buef" (ox eyes) in proper French.
And with him was a Genoese
Who should then have been drowned,
For he was a turncoat and renegade.
He had become a Saracen,
And his name was Nasr-ed-din
He served the sultan as admiral
And official interpreter. In brief,
These two had schemed
To destroy the worthy king
Who holds lordship over Cyprus.
Now I'll describe this plot,
This treason, this evil plan
They had concocted and devised
Because it should not be kept secret,
But rather should be completely revealed.

You've heard and been informed
About all the terms the treaty contained,
Just as I have related them to you.
And so now you may learn in truth
That they acted in bad faith;
And this peace agreement
Was quite treacherously negotiated.
And this was the whole of their plan.
They could not recover
Through either cunning or action
The great damage and huge loss
That was manifestly evident to everyone,
How Alexandria had been captured
And the common people slaughtered.
And they could take no revenge
On the king as long as the foreigners
And the noblemen continued to serve him.
And if it happened that these men departed
When the king would be expecting a lasting peace,
He would then retain no knights
And thus might be brought to shame.
For if he no longer had an army of men,
His own Cypriot warriors would be able
To do nothing against them should they come.
In this way they plotted to destroy the king
When they would see their tails shining,

et toute chypre entierement
mais il ira bien autrement
comment quil aient leurs galees
pres de .cc. bien aprestees
qui flotent dedens le flumaire
quest entre alixandre et le quaire

Encor y a un autre point
le quel je noublieray point
se la pais fust bien affermee
il est certein quen leur contree
venissent gens de toutes pars
francois · alemans · et lombars
et de mainte autre region
lun venist par devotion
au sepulchre en pelerinage
et fust quittes de tout servage
lautre venist pour marchander
et li autres pour demander
le demi commerque dou roy
et encor plus certes je croy
quen toutes les notables villes
qui sont pour marchandise abilles
li roys y heust de ses gens
chevaliers · bourgois ou sergens
pour lever et pour recevoir
la rente quil y doit avoir
et sil en levoit les profis
.vii. moys ou .viii. ou .ix. ou dis
de tout ce la ne leur chaloit
car le traison le valoit
et quant li traitre verroient
que crestien asseur seroient
garder feroient et fermer
tous les pors quil ont sus la mer
si qua un jour et a une heure
les penroient tous sans demeure
ne jamais deaus neschaperoient
einsois tous les decoperoient
sarient les corps et la chevanse
mais nest pas voir quan que fols pense

Encor y ot une cautelle
qui est de traison ancelle
pour mieux la faussete couvrir
que je vueil dire et descouvrir
irbouga pensoit en son cuer
que li roy de chypre a nul fuer

And all of Cyprus in addition.
But things went quite otherwise
Even though they had their galleys,
More than two hundred in number, all prepared,
And these were floating on the Nile,
Which flows between Alexandria and Cairo.

There is yet another point,
And this I won't ignore at all.
If the accord were finally ratified,
It is certain that men should travel
Into their country from all parts,
French, Germans, and Lombards,
As well as those of many other regions.
One would come devoutly
As a pilgrim to the Holy Sepulchre
And he would be free from all taxes.
Another would come to trade,
And another in order to demand
The king's half of the commerque,
And even many others, I believe for certain.
So that in all the towns of note,
Those suited to merchants,
The king would have his people,
Knights, burgesses, or servants,
For the purpose of raising and taking in
The revenue he was to receive.
And if he were to raise the taxes
For seven months, or eight, even nine or ten,
They would not be troubled at all by this
Because this would further their treason.
And when the traitors should see
That the Christians were feeling secure,
They would close and put guards at
All the ports that open onto the sea,
So that on one day and in an hour
They'd take every man prisoner without delay;
Nor would they ever escape them;
Instead they'd massacre all of them
And seize their bodies and goods.
But fools think true what is not!

There is yet another twist
That was a help to the treachery
To better cover up the falseness,
And this I intend to reveal and describe.
Yalbogha believed in his heart
That the king of Cyprus in no way

ne lairoit quavec leurs messages
nenvoiast des siens bons et sages
par quoy li soudans acordast
ceste pais · et quil la jurast
irbouga hucha nassardin
si li a dit en son latin
cest a dire en arabech
crestiens penrons par le bech
se li roys chypriens envoie
vers le soudan · je loeroie
qua ses gens faciens bone chiere
lie honnourable et esclatiere
et quil aient vins et vitaille
que li soudans leur paie et baille
par nos villes le manderons
si queinsi les deceverons
nil ne porront apercevoir
que nous les vueillons decevoir
ainsois penseront que jamais
ne doie faillir ceste pais
einsi decevoir les cuidoient
et certes il se decevoient
car il ni avoit sarrazin
qui ne dist a son voisin
en souspirant son en parloit
que ceste pais riens ne valoit
et qua tous estoit deshonneur
et grant honte pour leur signeur
uns enfes estoit li soudans
denviron .xiii. ou .xiiii. ans
qui navoit pas bien congnoissance cccxlviiV
de leur mauvaise decevance
einsi avoient ordene
que crestien fussent mal mene
mais dieux qui est lassus enhaut
a ses amis onques ne faut
eins les conforte et les gouverne
en terre · en mer et en taverne
qui est la chapelle au dyable
et vraiement ce nest pas fable
car on y aprent a jurer
a mentir et a parjurer
ordure · luxure · et usure
et toute mauvaise apresure
de jour de nuit et a toute heure
voire en pais ou je demeure
volt punir ceste trayson
et les siens mettre a garison

Would renounce sending his own good
And wise men along with their messengers,
So that the sultan would agree
To the peace and swear to it.
Yalbogha called over Nasr-ed-din
And spoke to him in his own language,
That is, in Arabic:
"We'll undo the Christians with the wind
Of trickery. If the king of Cyprus sends
An embassy to the sultan, I'll advise
That we welcome his men in friendship,
Treat them pleasantly, honorably, and generously,
And let them have wine and food
That the sultan will provide and furnish.
Throughout our towns we'll send the word
So that we can deceive them in this way,
Nor will they be able to discover
How we are bent on betrayal;
Instead they'll trust that the peace
Will never be broken."
In this way they aimed to trick them,
But in truth they deceived themselves
Because there was no Saracen
Who didn't say to his neighbor with a sigh
If the matter was being discussed
That this treaty was worthless
And dishonorable to all,
As well as a very shameful thing for their lord.
The sultan was a boy
Of perhaps twelve or thirteen,
Who in truth knew very little
Of their malicious trickery.
So they planned that the Christians
Should be ill served,
But God, Who is in the sky above,
Never fails His friends,
But rather comforts and guides them
On earth, on sea, and at the inn,
Which is the devil's chapel
(And truly it's no lie
Because here a man learns about swearing,
Lying, breaking his word,
Filthy things, high living, and usury,
All manner of sinful occupation,
By day, by night, at every hour;
This is true in the country where I live);
He intended to punish this treachery
And see to the safety of His own people.

Irbouga dont je nous devise
avoit ordene la devise
de ceste tres grant faussete
en chypre avoit .ii. fois este
avec celui qui retournoit
et qui les chetis ramenoit
or vous vueil dire de yrbouga
.i. jour esbatre sen ala
acompaingniez petitement
mais en son droit esbatement
fu tous par pieces decopez
pour ce qui estoit encopez
que mauvaisement fait lavoit
et autrement quil ne devoit
et cils qui estoit en son lieu
jura plus de .c. fois son dieu
que ja le traitie ne tenroit
en la guise que fais estoit
dont il avint que le tricople
vosist estre en coustentinoble
car sarrazin pour cest acort
estoient en si grant descort
et en si grant controversie
quen grant peril fu de sa vie
dont au bon roy fu raporte
quon lavoit pris et arreste
li soudant questoit .i. enfant
en avoit le cuer moult dolent
mais ne se savoit entremettre
si quil y sceust conseil mettre
car quant pueples est en rumour
ni a courtoisie namour
einsois est si mortels peris
com pour en leure estre peris
einsi fu li vers retournez
et tous li maus seur lui tournez
et se nassardin a la feste
heust este · il fust sans teste
car eschapez ne fust a piece
quil ne fust tailliez piece a piece

Or revenray a mon propos
car encor a parler propos
de la matiere dessusdite
quelle me plaist et mi delite
quant les messagiers chypriens
avec pluseurs crestiens
et ceuls dou roy arragonnois
et les messagiers genevois

Yalbogha, of whom I speak,
Had conceived the plans
For this very great deception.
He had been in Cyprus two times
Along with the man who was returning
And bringing back the prisoners.
Now I intend to tell you about Yalbogha.
One day he went out for pleasure
With but a small company,
Yet while they were enjoying themselves
All of them were cut to pieces
Because he had been faulted about the agreement,
That he had done this with evil intent
And moreover that he had not abandoned it.
And the man who took his place
Swore more than a hundred times by his god
How he would not keep the treaty
In the form that had been agreed upon.
Now it happened that the turcoplier
Was eager to be in Constantinople,
But the Saracens disagreed so much
Among themselves about the treaty
And raised such a fuss
He was put in great peril of his life,
And so it was then reported to the good king
That he had been taken and imprisoned.
The sultan, who was a child,
Was quite dismayed at heart over this,
But did not know how to intervene
So that he could have given advice.
For when a great crowd is driven by rumor
There's neither courtesy nor love therein,
But rather the danger is so great
He could have been killed on the spot.
And yet the boar turned, and all the ill will
Was directed toward Yalbogha,
And if Nasr-ed-din had been present
At the feast, he'd have lost his head;
Never would that man have escaped
Without being dismembered piece by piece.

Now I'll return to my theme
Because I think to say more
About matters already mentioned
Since this pleases and delights me.
After the Cypriot messengers
Along with several Christians,
The men from the king of Aragon,
And the Genoese messengers,

et les .iii. signeurs sarrazins
furent descendus de leurs lins
de leurs barges et de leurs naves
et aussi trestous les esclaves
li amiraus dalixandrie
leur envoia par courtoisie
de sa maisnie et de sa gent
qui les recurent bel et gent
et moult tres honnourablement
et savoient commandement
quon les menast en leurs hostes
mais il furent tres bien montes
quasses chevaus leur envoia
pour les crestiens qui furent la
et quant il furent a cheval cccxlviiiR
premierement a lamiral
alerent faire reverence
et il les recut sans doubtance
bien et bel et courtoisement
et moult tres amiablement
et puis aus hostelx les menerent
et si tres bien les herbergierent
quil il navoient point de deffaut
de tout ce qua corps de homme faut

Mais en mil jour ne vous diroie
le gieu · la feste et la grant joie
que ceuls dalixandre menoient
des prisonniers qui revenoient
car lun y avoit son voisin
lautre son frere ou son cousin
et lautre son oncle ou son pere
or estoient hors de misere
et sestoient tuit dalixandre
si quil ne pooient entendre
a riens · fors qua eaus resjoir
et a leurs amis conjouir
encor y avoit autre cause
dont leur joie vient et se cause
li communs la pais desiroit
tant que nuls ne le vous diroit
et on disoit communement
par tout · et veritablement
que la pais estoit confermee
dou roy de chypre et acordee
et que li soudant la tenra
quant li cadix a li venra
et les amiraus qui la sont
qui par tout la publieront

And the three Saracen lords too
Had disembarked from their ships,
From their transports, from their boats,
And all the slaves did as well,
The admiral of Alexandria
Sent them as a courtesy
Some of his people and household retinue,
Who welcomed them fittingly and well,
And with great honor too.
And they had been ordered
To conduct them to their own houses.
Now they were well supplied with horses
Since the admiral had sent enough
For the Christians who were there present.
And after these men were mounted,
They went first to the admiral
To pay their proper respects.
And he received them, there is no doubt,
Well and courteously and fittingly,
And in a very friendly fashion.
Afterward, they were taken to the houses,
And there they accommodated them so comfortably
That they lacked nothing at all
Of what the human body requires.

But in a thousand days I could not tell you
Of the merriment, the feasts, and great celebration
That those in Alexandria did hold
For the sake of the prisoners who were returning.
For one man found his neighbor,
The other his brother or his cousin,
And someone else his uncle or his father.
They were now beyond suffering,
And so were all in Alexandria,
So that they found themselves able to attend
To nothing but celebrating with them
And making merry with their loved ones.
There was yet another reason
Why joy had come on them and been the result.
The commune was eager for peace,
More so than any man could tell you.
And it was commonly said
By all—and this is true
—That peace had been agreed upon
And granted by the king of Cyprus,
And that the sultan would hold to it
When the cadis returned to him
And also the admirals who were there present,
Who would make this public everywhere.

.viii. jours entiers y sejournerent
et en la ville se jouerent
qui estoit grant et longue et lee
de tours et de murs bien fermee
au partir furent deffraie
de quan quil avoient fraie
des gens le soudan proprement
a bonne chiere et liement
tant que nassardins les vint querre
li renoiez · car en la terre
navoit homme qui les peust
si bien conduire ne sceust
pour ce quil savoit les langages
le pais · et tous les passages

Alentree dou moys davril
quoisillons chantent en labril
haut et cler · et font maint hoquet
lan mil .ccc. .lxvii.
au matinet sans plus attendre
se departirent dalixandre
les messages dont jay conte
il sont tuit a cheval monte
et cheminerent sans contraire
tant quil sont venu au flumaire
entre .ii. nont pas fait sejour
eins y alerent en .i. jour
le flumaire est une riviere
bele · clere · seinne · et legiere
si douce comme yaue puet estre
et keurt en paradis terrestre
or vous diray dont elle vient
sans mentir · et quelle devient
quant nostres sires fist le monde
ou tous biens naist croist et abonde
il fist premiers le firmament
la terre et quan quil y apent
le biau soleil et les planettes
les estoiles cleres et nettes
et la lune pour alumer
par nuit · lair · la terre et la mer
le jour · la nuit et la semainne
lomme la femme a po de peinne
et einsi le truis en la bible
car riens nest a dieu impossible
il fist le paradis terrestre
dont lomme fu signeur et mestre ·
et dedens le mist pour ouvrer
legierement le puis prouver

cccxlviiiV

Eight days in all they remained
And made merry in the city,
Which was large and long and wide,
Well enclosed with walls and towers.
Upon leaving, they were repaid
For whatever they had spent
By the men of the sultan,
Properly, willingly, and happily.
Finally Nasr-ed-din sought them out,
The renegade, because in that land
No other man could
Or knew how to guide them so well
Since he spoke the languages,
Was familiar with the country and all the routes.

At the beginning of the month of April,
When birds in the trees sing
Loud and clear and offer many a lyric,
In the year thirteen hundred sixty-seven,
With no further delay they departed
One morning from Alexandria,
The messengers I've mentioned.
All were mounted on horseback
And made their way without trouble
Until they arrived at the Nile.
Between the two points, they did not stop,
But made the journey there in one day.
The river Nile is beautiful,
Clear, pure, and gentle,
As sweet as water can be,
And it flows into the earthly paradise.
Now I'll say whence it comes
And what happens to it, avoiding fable.
When Our Lord created the world
Where every good thing is born, grows, and flourishes,
He first made the firmament,
The earth, and all it contains;
The beautiful sun and the planets,
The stars, bright and pure,
And the moon as well to illumine
By night the air, earth, and sea;
The day, the night, and the week,
Man, woman—and all with little effort,
And I find it so in the Bible,
For nothing is impossible for God.
He fashioned the earthly paradise
Over which man was lord and master,
And he put him there to work.
This I can easily prove.

en ce paradis delitable
qui est a trestout delit able
nostres sires y mist .i. flueve
si comme genesis le prueve
plus bel ne puet on deviser
pour amoistir et arrouser
la terre · et cils flueves la duit
a porter fueille · fleur · et fruit
herbes · arbres · racine et greinne
pour vivre creature humeinne
a lissir de ce paradis
que nostres sires fist jadis
se depart cils flueves en .iiii.
nuls a droit ne le puet debatre
le premier a a non physon
et le second a a non gyon
le tiers tygris · lautre eufrates
ce sont leurs .iiii. noms apres
physon est uns flueves qui bat
par mi la terre de enlath
gyon va en ethyopie
tygris · au quaire et en surie
et passe deles damiette
la chiet en mer · et cest sa mette
toute voie on lapelle au quaire
et en surie le flumaire
en arabich cest son droit non
outre mer est de grant renon

Apres ce ceuls qui les convoient
prirent congie quant le flun voient
en alixandre retournerent
et nos gens en flumaire entrerent
en ce flun sont li messagier
qui sefforcierent de nagier
si ont tant a leaue estrive
que tuit sont au quaire arrive
par dales lille de rousset
passerent a .i. matinet
ou li roys s. loys fu pris
de sarrazins et entrepris
et le .vi^{e}. jour de mars
einsois que li jours fust espars
vinrent au quaire ce me samble
crestiens et sarrazins ensamble
ou flun furent .v. jours entiers
et on les vit moult volentiers
quant il furent tuit descendu
car moult longuement atendu

In this delightful paradise
That offers pleasure to all,
Our Lord put a river,
Just as Genesis bears witness,
None more beautiful could one devise,
In order to water and nourish
The earth, and the river caused it
To bring forth leaves, flowers, and fruit,
Grass, trees, roots, and grain
To sustain every human being.
As it issues from the paradise
That Our Lord created long ago
—This river divides into four.
No man can rightly dispute this.
The first is called Physon,
And the second's name is Gyon,
The third Tigris, and the last Euphrates.
These four are their names. Further on
Physon is a river that flows
Throughout the land of Enlath.
Gyon goes through Ethiopia,
The Tigris into Cairo and Syria
And passes afterward by Damietta.
There it falls into the sea, and that is its limit.
However in both Cairo and Syria
It is called the Nile.
In Arabic, Flumaire is its proper name;
Across the sea it is of great renown.

After this, those who were accompanying them
Took their leave when they spied the river.
To Alexandria they returned,
And our people put out on the Nile.
The messengers were on the river,
Who exerted themselves to cross by boat.
And so they struggled through the water
Until they all arrived in Cairo.
They passed one morning
By the island of Rosetta
Where St. Louis the king was captured
And made prisoner by the Saracens.
And on the sixth day of March
Before dawn broke fully,
They came into Cairo, so I think,
The Christians and Saracens together.
They had traveled five days on the river in all
And were a most welcome sight indeed
When they all disembarked,
For they had been expected a long time

pluseurs sarrazins les avoient
qui a veoir les desiroient
le soudan par especial
et en apres li amiral
et toute la gent de leur court
or vous vueil conter brief et court
lonneur · le samblant et la joie
quon leur fist en chambre et en voie
car li plus grant et li menour
leur faisoient feste et honnour

Certes dire ne vous porroie
en .i. an la feste et la joie
quon faisoit en chambre et en rue
par le quaire de leur venue
moult richement les ostelerent
et en leurs hostelx les menerent
le tricoplier messires guis
toutes leurs gens et ses .ii. fils
et messires robers li rous
neurent cun hostel pour euls tous
et un autre les genevois
aveques les arragonnois
a tous les jours on leur bailloit
argent · pour quan quil leur failloit
mais li pueples toudis sefforce
de faire feste et joie pour ce
quil cuidoit que la pais fust faite
et elle estoit toute deffaite
eins avoient vin et viande
et tout ce quapetis demande
largement et en grant plante cccxlixR
et espices a volente

Quarante jours y demourerent
et babyloinne leur moustrerent
de chief en chief · et puis le quaire
qui sont cites de tel affaire
que chascune est ce mest avis
mil fois plus grande que paris
et si sont .ii. fois mieus pueplees
puis leur moustrerent les galees
qui estoient seur le flumaire
pour lisle de chypre deffaire
si com devant lay devise
se vous lavez bien avise
et pour destruire le bon roy
qui ni pensoit que bonne foy
mais par tout leur admenistrerent

By a number of the Saracens,
Who were eager to see them,
Especially the sultan,
And after him the admiral too,
Along with all the people from their court.
Now I'll give a brief and short account
Of the honor, the reception, the welcome
That was accorded them at court and on the street,
For those of the highest and lowest ranks
Honored and regaled them.

Surely I could not describe in a year
The festivities and merrymaking
Arranged for them indoors and on the street
Throughout Cairo because of their arrival.
They housed them in grand style,
And to their residences they led them.
The turcoplier, my lord Gui,
All their people and his two sons,
And also my lord Robert the Red
Had one residence for the three of them,
And the Genoese another,
Along with the men from Aragon.
Every day they were given
Money for whatever it was they needed.
But each day the people
Devoted themselves to feasting and merrymaking,
For they believed that peace had been concluded,
And it had been completely sabotaged.
In any case our men had wine and meat,
As well as all that appetite might demand
In great and generous portions,
With such spices as they wanted.

Forty days they remained there,
And they showed them Babylon,
Then Cairo from one end to the other,
Which are cities of such extent
That each one is, or so I think,
A thousand times bigger than Paris,
And each has twice as many people.
Then they were shown the galleys
That were drawn up on the Nile
For the destruction of the island of Cyprus,
As I mentioned earlier
If you've paid good attention
—And to undo the good king
Whose intentions were all in good faith.
Now everywhere they were provided

chevaus assez quil chevaucherent
qui estoient de paremens
pour les signeurs et pour leurs gens
chameux · roncins et haguenees
bien et richement ensellees
quant il eurent tout visete
si com je vous ay recite
le lonc et le le de .ii. villes
et leurs ouevres qui sont soutilles
les galees et le flumaire
lestat la guise · et le repaire
et ce vint au chief de .iii jours
.ii. amiraus · les ambassours
menerent devers le soudan
et encor leur amena len
chevaus pour aler en chastel
qui est grant mervilleus et bel

Si nest pas raison que je oublie
la maniere · et que je ne die
coment il furent receu
et quil ont trouve et veu
je vous di quil a une place
grande et longue et large despace
droitement au pie dou chastel
la trouverent il .i. tropel
de .iii. a .v. mille chevaus
qui estoient des amiraus
et de leurs gens qui les tenoient
et la leurs signeurs atendoient
au piet dou chastel descendirent
et en bel arroy se meirent
et puis il monterent amont
la de gens avoit si grant mont
que ne le saroie nombrer
tant bien men sceusse encombrer
.xxxiiii. amiraus trouverent
avec le soudan · puis entrerent
main a main dedens le palais
qui nestoit trop biaus ne trop lais
fais est en forme dune eglise
et de lancienne devise
a pilers et a votes fais
et si nestoit pas contrefais
car tous duevre sarrazinoise
estoit contraire a la francoise
li soudans estoit en .i. lit
basset · bien pare pour delit
et a sa destre coste estoient

With horses enough, which they rode,
Which were richly draped
For the lords—and for their people;
Camels, horses, and chargers,
Well and richly accoutered.
After they had visited everything,
Just as I have described,
Of these two cities, from one end to the other,
And their public works, which are elegant,
The galleys, and the Nile,
The place, its features and surroundings,
And three days came to an end,
Two admirals led the ambassadors
Into the presence of the sultan,
And yet again they were given
Horses to ride to the castle,
Which is huge, wondrous, and beautiful.

And so it's not right I should overlook
And not recount the way
That they were received
As well as what they found and saw.
I tell you there's a place
Spacious, wide, and long in its extent
Right at the foot of the castle,
And there they found a herd
Of four or five thousand horses
That belonged to the admirals
And other men who were keeping them,
And these awaited their lords in that place.
They dismounted at the foot of the castle
And dressed in their finest,
And afterward they remounted.
There were so many on horseback
That I could not number them
However I might strain to do so.
They found thirty-four admirals
With the sultan and afterward hand in hand
Entered the palace, which was
Neither very beautiful nor very ugly,
Fashioned in the shape of a church
And of an ancient design,
Constructed with pillars and vaults.
And it was by no means a copy,
But all of Saracen workmanship it was,
Different from the French style.
The sultan was on a couch
Well designed for comfort;
And at his right side were

.ii. grans amiraus qui tenoient
chascuns une hache en sa main
ne say sil le font soir et main
ou son le faisoit pour veoir
que pas ne le faut pourveoir
et quil est toudis pourveus
si questre ne puet deceus
dautre part les cadix estoient
qui leur fausse loy gouvernoient
et les amiraus tout entour
parez comme duc ou contour
en ce palais dont je vous conte
avoit mil chevaliers par compte
chascuns a dorez esperons
et navoient nuls chaperons
car chascuns avoit faciole
sus sa teste fust sage ou fole
chascuns avoit lespee sainte cccxlixV
et tenoient moult grant ensainte
tant estoient serre et joint
lun devant lautre et si a point
questre ressambloient .ii. murs
entre .ii. tymbres et taburs
menestres de bouche · cymbales
faisoient restentir les sales
car si grant noise demenoient
que toutes les gens essourdoient
a lentree de ce palais
ou on feist bien un eslais
tant estoit grans et lons et lez
ot .c. sarrazins aus .ii. lez
et chascuns tenoit une hache
dont on tuast bien une vache
quant li dessusdit messagier
furent entreaus · sans atargier
leur firent oster leurs solers
et sestoit li temps nes et clers
et vesa la raison pour quoy
autre cause ni say ne voy
on avoit par grant signourie
pare de tapis de turquie
le palais si tres richement
quon ne porroit mieux nullement
si ne voloient quafolez
fust des crestiens · ou defoulez
et pour ytant les deschaussoient
ou puet estre quil le faisoient
pour plus humblement aourer
le soudan · et mieux honnourer

Two huge admirals, each of whom was
Holding an axe in his hand.
I don't know if they do this night and day
Or if it was done just for show,
That this was no special occasion
And that he is always ready
To prevent any treason against him.
On the other side were some cadises
Who presided over their false law,
And there were admirals all around
Dressed in the manner of dukes or counts.
In this palace I am describing
Were knights a thousand in number,
Each with gilded spurs,
Though none had a hooded cape,
But rather a turban
On the head, whether wise man or fool.
Every man was girt with a sword
And formed in quite tight ranks
So closely were they standing together,
One in front of the other so precisely
They appeared to be two walls.
With two drums large and small,
And cymbals, and court musicians as well
They did make the hall resound,
And they made such a noise
That all the men were deafened.
At the palace entrance,
Where a platform had been built
That was so big and wide and long.
It held a hundred Saracens in two ranks,
And each man was brandishing an ax
You could have used to fell an ox.
When the messengers I've mentioned
Had entered, not delaying,
They were helped off with their shoes.
And yet the weather was dry and clear.
And here is the reason why,
And I know about or surmise no other cause.
With great pomp the palace
Had been so richly arrayed
With Turkish carpets,
It could not have been better done.
So they did not wish that these be soiled
Or damaged by the Christians.
And for this reason their shoes were removed.
Or it could be this was done
To offer more humble adoration
To the sultan and honor him better.

or vous diray le contenance
quant il firent la reverence
si tost comme il porent choisir
le soudan · sans penre loisir
et tantost sans essoinne querre
il leur couvint baisier le terre
et a toutes leurs gens aussi
quil le couvenoit faire ainsi
et quant il furent releve
droit en mi le palais pave
a .ii. genous sagenouillerent
et seconde fois la baisierent
et toutes leurs gens ensement
questre ne pooit autrement
quant il furent en la presence
dou soudan · par droite ordenance
la baisierent la tierce fois
lors se preirent par les dois
et parler au soudan alerent
mais toutes leurs gens demourerent
a luis dou palais et veoient
le mistere et quan quil faisoient

Le tricoplier premierement
par la bouche dun druguement
dist au soudan ce quil queroient
et pour quoy la venu estoient
quant il ot dit tout son plaisir
longuement et a grant loisir
et les autres eurent parle
qui estoient bien emparle
la chose estoit toute ordenee
quon leur donroit autre journee
a ceste fois plus ne feirent
et au soudan congie preirent
encor vueil autre chose dire
mais que vous vous tenez de rire
il ne veoit pas leurs talons
quil venoient a reculons
se darrier heust une perche
il fussent pris a la cauperche
ou feissent le soubresaut
mais einsi reculer leur faut
ades devers li le visage
en reculant · nostre message
ne point ne li tournent le dos
en ce point furent a bries mos
tant quil furent hors dou palais
lors se sont vers leurs chevaus trais

Now I'll tell about their demeanor
When they paid their respects.
As soon as they could see
The sultan, they had to kiss
The ground without hesitating,
Without making any fuss at all.
It was required that this be done,
And by all their servants as well.
And after they had risen up,
Right in the middle of the paved palace,
They knelt on both knees
And kissed it a second time,
And so did all their men
Since it could not be otherwise.
After they were in the presence
Of the sultan, they kissed the ground
A third time in strict obedience.
Then they took each other by the hand
And went to speak to the sultan,
But all their people remained
By the palace door, and they witnessed
The ceremony and whatever they did.

First the turcoplier
Through an interpreter's mouth
Told the sultan what they wanted
And why they had come there.
After he had said all he wished
At length and without hurrying
And the others had spoken too,
And they were very persuasive
—The decision was then firmly made
To give them an answer some other day.
At this time they did no more,
And they took their leave from the sultan.
There's something else I'd like to report,
But please refrain from laughing.
He did not see their heels
Because they walked out backwards.
Had there been a trap behind them
They would have all been caught
Or would have made a somersault.
But they had to go out this way,
Always facing him,
Our messengers, as they fell back
And never turned their backs to him.
To be brief, in this posture
They remained until they left the palace.
Then they approached their mounts,

et .ii. amiraus les menerent
en leurs hostelx et convoierent
cependant li soudans fist faire cccIR
robes sarrazines au quaire
pour eaus et pour toutes leurs gens
par .x. ou par .xii. sergens
en leurs hostes les envoia
li uns deaus tres bien les ploia
en disant quil les vestiroient
quant devant le soudan iroient
et vraiement cest la maniere
quil donne chascun robe entiere
qui en message va a li
nonques messages ni failli

Li temps passa li termes vint
qualer au soudan les couvint
si qua sa court se transporterent
et en droit estat le trouverent
de lautre fois ne plus ne meins
et se devez estre certeins
que chascuns avoit sarrazine
robe · dou soudan bonne et fine
bien vestie et bien endossee
einsi furent a leur journee
et .iii. fois la terre baisierent
si com devant · puis sen alerent
au soudan faire leur requeste
or gart dieux leur corps et leur teste
car sil ne les prent tous en cure
il sont de mort en aventure
quant li soudans et ses consaus
ou il avoit .xxx. amiraus
les orent tres bien entendu
il ne leur ont rien respondu
fors tant sans plus quil leur meirent
autre journee · et leur deirent
quadont il leur responderoient
de tout ce quil leur requeroient

Il avoit la .ii. amiraus
faus · traitres · et desloiaus
lun avoit a non sodamour
lautre julep a po damour
ces .ii. deirent au soudan
sire vengence de cest an
narez dou meffait dalixandre
si bien · com de ceste gent prendre
faites les prendre et retenir

And the two admirals led them
And escorted them to their residences.
Meanwhile the sultan had
Saracen robes made in Cairo
For them and for all their retinue.
These were sent to their hotels
By ten or twelve servants,
One of whom folded them expertly,
Saying they should wear the robes
When they should appear before the sultan.
And truly that's his custom:
To give an entire outfit
To whatever messenger comes to him.
Nor did any messenger ever fail to get one.

Time passed; the appointed day arrived
When they were to go to the sultan.
And so they made their way to his court
And found him of the same mind
As before, no more, no less.
And you should be certain
That every man had on the good, rich
Saracen robes of the sultan,
Was well dressed and nicely turned out.
In this fashion, they went on their way
And kissed the ground three times,
The same as before, then approached
The sultan to make their request.
Now may God save their heads and bodies!
For if He does not look out for them,
They do run the danger of death.
When the sultan and his council,
Which numbered thirty admirals,
Had heard them out quite thoroughly,
They said nothing in response,
Save this, and no more, that they'd appointed
Another day for them and said to them
They'd give them an answer then
To all they had requested of them.

Present were two admirals
Who were false, traitorous, and faithless,
The first named Sedamour,
And the other Julep, a man with little love.
These two said to the sultan:
"Sire, you'll be able to take this year
No vengeance for the harm done Alexandria
As satisfying as you can wreak upon this group.
Have them taken and bound so that every man

et tous de male mort morir
ou vous les metez en servage
en chaainnez en une cage
par quoy ceuls qui dessa venront
et en tel estat les verront
prengnent en eaus tel exemplaire
que mais ne vous osent meffaire
la chose fu toute acordee
de tous loee et approuvee
la avoit .i. vies amiral
qui leur dist tout en general
biaus seigneurs que volez vous faire
honnir nous volez et deffaire
vostre sauf conduit romperez
gardez vous bien que vous ferez
de ces messages retenir
car grans maus en porroit venir
et tous crestiente mouvoir
encontre nous a dire voir
.xx. jours furent en ce debat
quades lamiraus se debat
afin que le sauf conduit teingne
seurement quoy quil aveingne
finablement il sacorderent
et une autre pais ordenerent
qui estoit au roy damageuse
et a tout son pais honteuse
.ii. amiraus ont esleus
sages hommes et pourveus
et devers le roy les envoient
et nos messages les convoient
tant seulement pour raporter
se li roys vorroit acorder
la pais cornue quil li portent
mais nennil · en vain sen efforcent
mais pour rien quon leur sache dire
ceste pais ne leur puet souffire
se le tricoplier ne la jure cccIV
dont cest despis et grant injure
toute voie il les delivrerent
et en chipre les renvoierent
si se meirent au retour
a grant joie et a grant baudour

Mais einsois quil se departissent
il fu ordene quil veissent
les bestes que li soudans a
et leur garde pas ne tensa

May be forced to suffer a miserable death.
Or put them in slavery,
In chains, in a cage
So that those who come this way
And see them in such a fix
Will find them such good examples
They'll never dare injure you."
This course was agreed upon by all,
Praised and approved by every man.
There was an old admiral who spoke to all assembled:
"Good lords, what do you aim to accomplish?
It is your intention to dishonor and undo us!
You'll violate your pledge of safe conduct.
You should be very wary about
Holding these messengers prisoner
Because from this great harm might result
And all Christendom move
Against us, to tell the truth!"
For twenty days the debate lasted,
Which the admiral then started,
To the end that the safe conduct should be respected,
With certainty, whatever might happen.
Finally, they came to an agreement
And drew up another peace treaty
That would harm the king
And was shameful to all his country.
They chose two admirals,
Wise and thoughtful men,
And sent them to the king,
And our messengers accompanied them,
And they were only to report
If the king would swear to
The unfair agreement they brought.
But not at all! In vain they made this effort,
And despite all that was said to them
About the agreement hardly being appropriate
If the turcoplier hadn't sworn to it;
And so this was spiteful and very insulting.
However they did release our men
And sent them back to Cyprus.
And these set about returning
With great joy and much celebration.

But before they departed,
They were authorized to go and see
The beasts that the sultan owns.
And their guards did not refuse,

eins les moustra sans contredit
tout en leure quil li fu dit
y li avoit .iii. olifans
qua merveilles estoient grans
aussi virent il une araffe
je ne say selle vint de jaffe
et li chevalier leur moustrerent
les gieus dont sarrasin jouerent
or vueil laissier ceste matiere
et revenir a la premiere

Quant li roys pleins de loyaute
vit la tres grant desloyaute
que li sarrazin li faisoient
et que le pais pas ne tenroient
et il sot bien tout leur affaire
il commanda tantost a faire
par son amiral une armee
si grant et si bien estofee
com faire porra bonnement
dedens monta isnellement
et en rodes sen vuet aler
la vuet il le temps differer
pour veoir que ce devenra
et se son tricoplier venra
et sil ne revient cest sententе
de passer la mer sans attente
et daler devant alixandre
car bien la cuide avoir et prendre
et tenir ou toute essillier
son ne li rent son tricoplier

Li roys en rodes demoura
et li maistres moult lonnoura
aussi feirent tuit li frere
chascuns de lui servir se pere
la le tricoplier atendoit
et souvent de lui demandoit
a ses privez · tant quil avint
quen brief temps en rodes revint
et avec lui amenoit
.ii. amiraus · dont on tenoit
que lun estoit li plus privez
de celui qui est ordenez
et qui a le gouvernement
de leur soudan et presentement
lautre y avoit .ii. fois este
lune en yver lautre en este

But showed them to them without opposition
The very hour the order was given.
There were three elephants
That were wondrously huge.
They also saw a giraffe,
I don't know if it came from Jaffa.
And the knights showed them
The sports the Saracens play.
Now I intend abandoning this theme
And returning to the first.

When the king, who was very trustworthy,
Perceived the very great treachery
That the Saracens were working against him
And that they'd not keep the peace
And he had learned all they had done,
He commanded his admiral
Immediately to raise an army
As large and as well supplied
As could be properly arranged.
The king quickly took to ship
And intended to make his way to Rhodes.
There he was to bide his time
To see what would develop
And if his turcoplier would return.
And if he did not come back, it was his intention
To cross the sea without delay
And present himself before Alexandria;
For he thought very much to seize and take it,
And either hold or destroy it utterly
If his turcoplier were not returned to him.

The king stayed on in Rhodes,
And the master honored him greatly,
As did all the brothers.
Each man strove to serve him.
There he awaited the turcoplier
And often asked his intimates
About the man until, as it happened,
He came back shortly thereafter to Rhodes.
And along with him he brought
Two admirals, one of whom was considered
The man most intimate with
The one who was in charge
Of and held the reins of government
For their sultan at that time.
The other had been there twice before,
Once in winter, the other time in summer.

et de par le soudan venoient
or vous diray ce quil queroient
einsi comme oy dire lay
il ne queroient que delay
et de la pais navoient cure
qui depuis leur fu chose dure

Sagement se sont contenu
et devant le roy sont venu
la fu monsigneur perceval
et le maistre de lospital
et le prince de galylee
et bremont qui bien fiert despee
et maint autre que pas ne nomme
qui tuit sont vaillant et preudomme
si deirent en leur presence
devant tous · et en audience
sire · cils est mors qui traitie
avoit lacort et le traitie
si que cils qui a la puissance
dou soudan · et sa gouvernance
dit quil ne le wet pas tenir
pour ce nous a fait ci venir
et wet quautre traities se face
que cestui · si plainne et efface
et que tout soit fait en son nom
quamiraus est de grant renon
baillie le nous a par epytres cccliR
par cedules et par chapitres
tenez ves les ci par escript
quil a de sa main propre escript
si les verrez et ferez lire
pour mieus savoir ce quil vuet dire
apres li feirent requestes
qui nestoient justes ne honnestes
et vraiement il demandoient
choses qua faire nafferoient
dont li gentils roy amast mieux
quon li eust creve les yeux
et que mais nafulast heaume
ou avoir perdu son royaume
ou tantost morir vraiement
quil leur acordast telement
et qua toute peinne soffrist
quen son royaume les souffrist
li roys vit bien leur volente
quen riens ne sont entalente
davoir traitie ne pais nacort
eins ne quierent que le descort

And both did come on the sultan's behalf.
Now I'll tell you what they were after,
Just as it was told to me.
They sought only to delay
And had no real interest in peace,
Which to them was something bitter.

They conducted themselves craftily
And appeared before the king.
Present were my lord Perceval
And the master of the Hospital,
The prince of Galilee,
And Brémont, who strikes well with the sword,
As well as many others I do not name,
Who are all valiant and worthy men.
So they spoke in their presence,
Before everyone so all could hear.
"Sire, that man is dead who negotiated
The accord and treaty.
And so the man who now holds the power
And directs the government for the sultan
Says he does not intend honoring it.
This is why he has sent us here:
And he wishes that another treaty be drawn up
To take the place of and annul this one,
And that all be done in his name
Because he is an admiral of great renown.
He has given us an agreement detailed
By chapter and verse.
Take it, see by the writing
That it was inscribed by his own hand.
So look this over and have it read,
The better to learn what meaning it intends."
Afterward they made demands of him
That were neither just nor honest.
And in truth they were seeking
Things that were not appropriate to do.
For the noble king would prefer
That someone tore out his eyes
And that he'd never don a helmet again,
Or that he'd lose his kingdom,
Or even die on the spot
Than to agree to such terms with them.
And so only with difficulty was he able
To endure having these men in his realm.
The king understood well their intention,
That in no way were they interested
In having a treaty, a peace, an accord.
Instead, they sought nothing but strife.

si sen partirent que response
nen portent qui vaille une ronce

Quant il se furent departi
li roys estoit en tel parti
quil cuidoit estre forsenez
il fist apparillier ses nez
et tantost monta en galee
et aussi fist toute larmee
si ne touna ne sa ne la
mais droit en chypre sen ala
pour son armee refforcier
a ses annemis efforcier
si quil fist tant en po de tans
par son avoir · et par son sans
quil ot .c. et .xl. voiles
et les sarrazins es estoiles
sa venue prophetisoient
cil dalixandre bien savoient
que li roys sus la mer estoit
et que son armee aprestoit
si quil estoient sus leur garde
chascuns pense chascuns resgarde
a la ville fortefier
li roys les faisoit espier
par gens qui vont seur la marine
si quil savoit tout leur couvine
conseil demanda quil feroit
et se vers alixandre iroit
mais son conseil finablement
li dist · sire certeinnement
nous ne savons lieu si possible
pour vous · com la cite de triple
par nostre conseil vous irez
car bien vous y emploierez
quil na de la mer dou soudan
jusquen pais le caraman
lieu ne place · bourc · ne repaire
ou mieux peust son honneur faire
si que li roys leur ottria
car grant desir daler y a
li roys fist recueillir sa gent
et tantost vallet et sergent
trestout leurs chevaus amenerent
et es naves les hostelerent
li roys monta et prist sa voie
droit vers triple · dieux le convoie
quil trouvera plus grant deffense
en ceaus de triple quon ne pense

And so they left without taking along
An answer worth more than a wooden penny.

When they departed,
The king was in such a state
He thought he was insane.
He had his ships readied
And embarked at once on his galley,
As did the whole army.
And he went neither here nor there
But made his way straight to Cyprus
In order to strengthen his forces in that place
And so he might press his enemies hard.
And through his wisdom and riches,
He worked so hard in a short time
That he had a hundred and forty sails.
And the Saracens saw in the stars
A prefiguring of his attack.
The Alexandrians knew well
That the king was at sea
And was preparing his army;
Thus they were on their guard.
Every man thought about, every man saw to
Fortifying the city.
The king had his people traveling
On the sea spy upon them,
And so he knew all their doings.
He asked advice about what to do
And whether he should make for Alexandria.
Yet in the end his advisors
Told him: "Sire, we feel
Certain there is nowhere
More likely for you than the city of Tripoli.
Proceed to that place, so we advise,
For there you will find success.
Indeed from the sultan's sea
To the land of the Caraman
There's no place, no city, no domain
Where one could better do what would honor him."
So the king agreed with them,
Desirous as he was of venturing there.
The king had his people assemble;
And at once servants and underlings
Brought out all their horses
And loaded them into the ships.
The king embarked and made his way
Straight to Tripoli. May God accompany him!
For in the townspeople of Tripoli
He'll find a stiffer defense than anyone expects!

Li roys sen va par mer nagent
droit a triple lui et sa gent
tant ont a la mer estrive
quil sont pres de triple arrive
et quant il vorrent terre prendre
on leur deffendi le descendre
car seur le port grans gent estoient
qui sa venue bien savoient
et sestoient tres bien arme
bien abillie bien acesme
de garros · de saiettes dars
despees · de lances de dars
moult se tenoient fierement cccliV
ensamble · et orguilleusement
tant estoient la gent sauvage
quil tenoient tout le rivage
et quant li gentils roys les voit
tantost sot ce qua faire avoit
moult vaillamment sa gent conforte
moult les prie moult les enorte
quil soient vaillant et vassal
il appella son amiral
et li commanda quil descende
tantost · et qua bien faire entende
car sil fiert bien de bonne espee
il dist quil li lairont lentree
mais li contes de herefort
et aussi perrin de grimort
arriverent certeinnement
devant tous et premierement
car il avoient .ii. galees
bien garnies et bien armees
et le premier qui descendi
des galees dont je vous di
fu un escuier de gascongne
qui fu bons en ceste besongne
guerrot avoit nom le vallet
et le second fu chastelet
un tres bon escuier danjo
et un chevalier de poito
nomme · perceval de colongne
fu li tiers qui petit ressongne
les sarrazins et leur emprise
car il ne les doubte ne prise

Lamiraut descendi apres
et li roy le tint mout de pres
si fist li princes et sa gent
et maint chevalier bel et gent
si font percevaus et bremons

The king sets out sailing over the sea
Straight to Tripoli, his people with him.
They drive themselves on the water
Until they draw close to Tripoli.
And when they intended to land,
Their debarkment was contested
By a great host at the port
Who were well informed of his coming,
And they were quite heavily armed,
Skilled men well supplied
With bolts, arrows, and bows,
With swords, lances, and darts.
They were formed up in tight
Ranks and arrogantly so;
The savage army was so many
They covered the whole shore.
And when the noble king saw these people,
He knew at once what he had to do.
Quite valiantly he encouraged his men,
Exhorted, pleaded forcefully with them
To be warlike and brave.
He summoned his admiral
And ordered him to disembark
At once and attend to doing well,
For if he struck hard with a good sword,
They would make a path for them.
Now the count of Hereford
Along with Perrin de Grimort
Had arrived on the scene, there is no doubt,
First, ahead of all the others,
For they had two galleys
Well equipped and well armed.
And the first man to leave
The galleys, whom I mention here,
Was a squire from Gascony,
Who was a good man in this spot.
The squire's name was Guerrot.
And the second was Chastelet,
A very able squire from Anjou.
And a knight from Poitou
Named Perceval of Coulonges
Was the third, who had little fear of
The Saracens and their enterprise,
For he did not fear or respect them.

Then the admiral disembarked afterward,
While the king followed closely,
As did the prince and his household,
Along with many a handsome and noble knight.
Perceval and Brémont did the same as well.

trop vous seroit lons li sermons
se tout voloie raconter
ne le vous saroie conter
quant il fuent tuit descendu
li uns na pas lautre atendu
la fu si mervilleus li chaples
que de triple jusqua estaples
ne fu piessa gaires plus grans
li bons roys estoit moult engrans
de ses anemis desconfire
il fiert il boute · il hache il tire
et si fierement se combat
quil tue quan quil abat
et li princes ne se faint mie
qua cent en a tollu la vie
et percevaus si bien si prueve
quil detranche tous ceaus quil trueve
bremons si vaillanment se moustre
que tous ceuls quil tient ou encontre
sont detaillie ou affole
mort · mehaingnie ou decole
brief aussi tous ceuls qui la sont
mervilleusement bien le font
et si tres bien que le pieur
cuidoit estre tout le milleur
si que la tant se combatirent
que les sarrazins desconfirent
et leur est li champs demourez
de sanc vermaus est coulourez
ni vaut esquermie ne luite
tuit se meirent a la fuite
li roys fist sonner la trompette
tantost en signe de retraite
si que sa gent se recueillirent
et tous ensamble se meirent
il tirerent hors leurs chevaus
et monterent comme vassaus
en belle et en bonne ordenance
com chevaliers plein de vaillance
si ont tant fait et tant erre
en bataille joint et serre
que devant triple sont venu
grant et petit · juene · et chenu
en ociant leurs annemis
qua fort sont en ville mis
et de triple jusqua la mer cccliiR
qui proprement le vuet esmer
na cune liette petite
des lieues qui sont en egypte

The account would take too long
If I intended to relate everything,
Nor would I be able to tell you.
When all had disembarked,
No man waited for anyone else.
The struggle was so incredible
That from Tripoli as far as Étaples
There had been none this grand for sometime.
The good king was very eager
To destroy his enemies.
He strikes, pushes, shoves, and pulls,
And fights with such fierceness
He kills as many as he touches.
And the prince hardly weakens,
Who deprived a hundred of their lives.
And Perceval proves himself so able
He dismembers every man he reaches.
Brémont shows himself so valiant
That all he comes upon or touches
Are cut down or wounded,
Killed, maimed, or decapitated.
In brief, all the men there present as well
Conducted themselves marvelously
And so ably that the very least
Among them thought to be the very best.
And so they struggled so hard
They defeated the Saracens,
And the field was left to them.
With red blood it was covered,
And swordplay or fighting was pointless;
All of them had taken to flight.
The king had the trumpet sounded
At once to signal a withdrawal
So that his forces might fall back
And assemble together.
They unloaded their horses
And mounted in a knightly fashion,
In fair and good order,
Like warriors full of courage.
And they made their way and proceeded far enough,
Joined in a tight formation
Until they arrived in front of Tripoli,
Men great and humble, young and old
Slaughtering their enemies,
Who were positioned in force within the city.
And from Tripoli to the sea,
A man who wished to judge correctly
Would say it was only a short mile
Of the kind of miles they have in Egypt.

La chasse longuement dura
tant en occist et acora
li rois et sa gent en la chace
que couverte en estoit la place
et tant docis en y avoit
quomme le nombre nen savoit
et gisoient gueules baees
entre la ville et les galees
li roy estoit devant la ville
et sarrasin plus de .xx. mille
les entrees li deffendoient
moult fort · et le mieus quil pooient
mais li roys est entrez dedens
avec sa gent malgre leurs dens
a la porte tant en ocist
que le plus hardi deaus vossist
bien estre en ynde la majour
einsi ne fina toute jour
docire · et sa gent de pillier
pour toute la ville essillier
et quant elle fu bien pillie
bien destruite et bien essillie
li roys le feu dedens bouta
car bien vit et pas ne doubta
quil ne la peussent tenir
et veoit le vespre venir
si fist la trompette sonner
pour mettre a point et ordener
sa gent qui estoient espars
par la ville de toutes pars
quant il furent tuit assamble
tant ont pillie tant ont emble
quil ni avoit garson ne page
qui ne fust chergiez de pillage
et qui neust tres grant richesse
li gentis roys pleins de noblesse
il na pas le cuer esperdu
trouva que il navoit perdu
cun chevalier tant seulement
et .ix. ou .x. qui folement
en la ville embatu sestoient
et les hostels pas ne savoient
mais il ne pot onques savoir
par homme qui la fust · le voir
quil puelent estre devenu
ne sil sont mort ou retenu
si queinsi fu triple gastee
prise · destruite · arse · et brulee

The pursuit lasted long.
During the chase, the king and his men
Cut down and killed so many
That the ground was covered with them.
And there were so many dead
No one could count them,
And these lay, their throats cut,
Between the town and the galleys.
The king was before the city,
And the Saracens, more than twenty thousand.
Defended the gates against him
Stoutly and as ably as they could.
But the king enters the place
With his army in the teeth of their resistance.
He killed so many at the gate
That the bravest among them
Would have preferred being in Greater India.
In fact, he did not halt his killing
That whole day, or his men their pillaging
So that the entire place could be devastated.
And when it had been fully looted,
Completely destroyed and quite laid waste,
The king put it to the torch,
For he saw well and didn't doubt
He and his men could not remain,
And evening, he realized, was coming.
So he had the trumpet sounded
In order to form up and assemble
His soldiers, who had dispersed
Through all parts of the city.
After every man returned,
They had pillaged and looted so much
There was no servant or page
Who was unburdened with booty
And did not now possess great riches.
The genteel king full of nobility
(He did not have a heavy heart)
Found that he had lost
But one knight alone,
And nine or ten who foolishly
Had taken shelter in the town,
And these were not familiar with the houses.
But he could learn from a man
Who was there nothing of the truth,
What might have happened to them,
Whether they'd been killed or taken.
This was how Tripoli was laid waste,
Captured, destroyed, torched, and burned.

Or vueil deviser la devise
de triple comme elle est assise
pres de la mer en .i. grant plain
siet · si quon la voit tout de plein
en my lieu a .ii. montaingnettes
qui sont rondes et hautelettes
dont seur lune a .i. chastelet
qui ni est messeant ne let
maisonnez sont toutes entour
et tient bien .iii. lieus de tour
mervilleusement est pueplee
de gens · et si nest pas fermee
li lieus dentour est odorans
par tout et si souef flairans
quil samble a tous nen doutez mie
quon soit en une espisserie
pour les fruis et pour les jardins
plantes de mains de sarrazins
car de tous fruis de toutes entes
de tous estos · de toutes plantes
de toutes herbes a racines
qui puelent porter medecines
trueve on la a tres grant plente
que sarrazin y ont plante
moult y a de belles fonteinnes
qui sont nettes cleres · et sainnes
la croist le sucre et la canelle
et mainte espice bonne et belle
mais il ni a point de riviere
or revenray a ma matiere

Pour ce que le roys dermenie
avoit requis le roy daye cccliiV
et encor li avoit escript
que pour la foy de jhesu crit
li soudans sa mort li procure
dont il est en grant aventure
quil nen soit destruis ou peris
tourbles en est ses esperis
et ses cuers a si grant meschie
comme davoir le chief tranchie
ou quil ne soit procheinnement
essilliez perpetuelment
se li bons roys ne le secourt
encor li manda brief et court
que sil vient a alayas
quil y venra plus que le pas
a tout quan quil porra mouvoir

Now I intend to describe Tripoli,
How the city was situated.
Close to the sea, in a great plain
It sat, and so could be clearly seen.
In the middle of that plain were two small mountains,
Which were round and rather steep,
On one of which was a small fortress
That was neither ugly nor ill designed.
There were lodges all around,
And it was fully three leagues in circumference.
The town was incredibly full
Of people and not walled in.
The surrounding areas were good-smelling
Throughout, with such a sweet scent
That everyone thought, without a doubt,
He was in a spice shop
Because of the fruit trees and gardens
Planted by Saracen hands.
For all kinds of fruit trees, saplings,
Graftings, plants,
All kinds of rooted herbs
That can bring forth medicine
Could be found there in great abundance,
Which had been planted there by the Saracens.
There were many beautiful fountains
That ran clear, clean, and healthy.
Sugar and cinnamon grew in the place,
As well as many other good and useful spices.
And yet there was no riverbank.
Now I'll return to my theme.

Because the king of Armenia
Had asked the king for help
And had even written to tell him
That, by the faith of Jesus Christ,
The sultan was seeking his death,
So he was then in great danger
That he might be killed or murdered.
His spirit was troubled thereby,
And he was so upset at heart
At the prospect of losing his head
Or in the near future suffering
Permanent exile if the good king
Did not come to his assistance.
And so he sent a message, short and sweet,
That if he did come to Layas,
To journey there at more than a walk
With as many men as he could find

de gens pour le chastel avoir
et se li nomme la journee
que li bons roys a aceptee
alayas est uns chastiaus
qui est fors et puissans et biaus
ville y a et siet sus la mer
et si vous vueil bien affermer
quaus ermins a fait maint ahan
cest leritage dou soudan
et si est assis en la marche
dermenie · et aus ermins marche

Li nobles roys au fier corage
estoit outre mer davantage
et en pais des sarrazins
si wet conforter les ermins
li roys de triple se parti
et sen ala a cuer parti
de joie et de merencolie
car moult souvent merencolie
a ses annemis damagier
et au roy dermenie aidier
et sa joie de son emprise
quant la cite de triple est prise
seur la mer de triple chevauche
mais il ni a maison de bauche
de terre · ne dautre marrien
quil narde · et ni espargne rien
souvent sespee en sanc a taint
chascuns tue quan quil ataint
einsi sen va tout combatant
et les sarrazins ociant
a alayas droite voie
boutant les feus que vous diroie
.iii. bonnes villes y a pris
et destruites li roys de pris
dont vesa les noms sans doubtance
cest courtouse liche et valence
et maintes grandes et petites
qui de peler les aus sont quites
car cest tout mort et mis en cendre
sans espargnier homme ne prendre
et quant la nuit venir veoit
en navige se retraioit
et y faisoit sa gent retraire
mais de jours aloient meffaire
sus sarrasins · et destruisoient
et tuoient quan quil trouvoient

To take possession of the citadel.
And he should tell him the day
That he, the good king, had accepted.
Layas is a fortress
Strong, secure, and handsome.
There is a town, and it sits by the sea;
And so I'd like to affirm strongly
The place has often troubled the Armenians.
It is the heritage of the sultan
And is situated in the Armenian
Frontier and borders on the Armenians.

The noble king with the proud heart
Was even further beyond the sea
And in the land of the Saracens.
So he wished to aid the Armenians.
The king left Tripoli behind
And went off, his heart divided
Between joy and grief,
For he often thought seriously about
Doing hurt to his enemies
And aiding the king of Armenia.
And he found joy in his intention
When the city of Tripoli was taken.
Along the coast of Tripoli he raids,
And there is no house of wood,
Or earth, or other material
That he doesn't burn, and he spares nothing.
Often he stains his sword with blood,
Kills whomever he comes upon.
So he journeys on, fighting all the way
And killing the Saracens,
Straight in the direction of Layas,
Setting all ablaze. What more should I say?
Three noble towns he has captured
And destroyed, this worthy king,
And these surely are their names:
Tortosa, Laodicea, and Banias,
And many large and small,
Now released from tasks of no importance,
With everyone dead, everything burned to cinders,
No man spared or taken prisoner.
And when he saw night come,
He withdrew to his ship.
And he made his men return too.
But for days they went on harassing
The Saracens, undoing
And killing whomever they came upon.

Li nobles roys frans et gentis
a son fait est si ententis
quavoir ne puet autre penser
nil ne saroit ailleurs penser
tant a erre pas ses journees
en nes · en coques en galees
quil vint devant alaias
quant il y fu .i. moult grant tas
vit de gens qui la latendoient
sans ceuls de pie .v. .m. estoient
tous a cheval pour lui deffendre
qua terre ne peust descendre
.i. jour en la mer sarresta
li roys · et moult bien sapresta
et se conseilla quil feroit
et comment il descenderoit
et quant il fu bien consilliez
bien aprestes bien abilliez
il fist nagier tout droit au port
et la se combati si fort cccliiiR
que maugre tous est descendus
tant en y ot de pourfendus
et de tuez quil sen fuirent
li roys et sa gent les sievirent
quil monterent sus les chevaus
comme preudommes et vassaus
la commensa moult forte chasse
il sen fuient li rois les chasse
et tant les chassa longuement
quil en fu repris durement
sarrazin sestoient retret
en un trop bon lieu pour le tret
cestoit en .i. rochier sauvage
pour porter au bon roy damage
si que li roys les fui tant
en ociant en combatant
cune grant lieue outre la ville
trouva la gent pleinne de guille
qui estoient en grant deffense
li roys fist mettre en ordenance
toute sa gent et recueillir
car il les voloit assaillir
mais il ne les pot aprochier
ne grever dedens le rochier
car il traioient si forment
et si tres mervilleusement
que tous ses chevaus ocioient
et a terre les abatoient

The noble king, generous and worthy,
Was so intent on his mission
He could have no other thought,
Nor was he able to think of other things.
So far did he sail in his travels
By ship, by galley, by boat
That he arrived before Layas.
Once there, he spied a great body
Of soldiers awaiting him,
Five thousand, excluding those on foot,
Who were mounted in order to deny
Him from being able to come ashore.
The king remained at sea
For one day, busied himself making preparations
And considered what to do
And how he should see disembark.
And after he was well counseled,
Well prepared, quite ready,
He had them sail straight into the port,
And there he battled them so fiercely
That despite them all he landed.
So many of the enemy were struck down
And killed that they took to flight.
The king and his army followed them
For they mounted on the horses
In the manner of brave men and knights.
The pursuit was very close.
They fled, the king hunted them down.
In fact he chased them so far
He was strongly censored.
The Saracens did retreat
To a quite ideal place for a trap.
This was in a wild, rocky spot
Where they could do harm to the king.
Now the king pursued them so far,
Fighting and killing all the while,
That in an open place outside the town
He found those people full of guile,
Who were in a strong defensive position.
The king had all his men
Assemble and form up
Because he intended attacking them.
But he could not close
Nor do them harm in their rocky positions
Because they shot so effectively
And so very incredibly at them
That all their horses were brought down
To the ground and killed.

li roys vit bien le grant meschief
et que deaus ne venroit a chief
se longuement leur traire dure
car sil perdoit sa monteure
en peril seroit de sa vie
et toute sa chevalerie

Li bons roys fist une retraite
et entour lui regarde et gaite
si trouva quil ont ja tue
de ses chevaus et afole
tant quil nen a que .iiii.^{xx}
lors dist seigneurs se sarrazins
meinnent longuement ceste dance
tuit serons a pie sans doubtance
dautre conseil user nous faut
lasse sommes et il fait chaut
si ne porrons aler a pie
prenons chascuns lance ou espie
et leur courons sus vitement
tous ensamble et serreement
se nous poons venir entriaux
il sen fuiront comme chevriaus
et les occirons a no guise
lors a chascuns sa lance prise
si que li roys leur couri seure
si fierement quen petit deure
furent mis a desconfiture
ni vaut saiette narmeure
car mort furent et desconfit
et certeinnement dieux le fit
qui li donna cest chose voire
grace · pris · honneur et victoire
tant en ot mort pres dou rochier
quil ni pooient chevauchier
qui fuir pot il sen fui
mais li roy plus ne les sievi
pour ce que reprendre se voit
de ce que tant fait en avoit

Alayas sen retourne
li bons roys qui envis sejourne
quant il y vint il assailly
le chastel · mais il y failly
car sa gent estoient lasse
greve · travillie · et foule
dou grant chaut · et de la bataille
et savoient po de vitaille

The king saw quite well the great damage
And that he could not get at them
If they kept up their shooting for long,
For if he lost his mount,
He'd be in danger of death,
And so should all his knights.

The king ordered a withdrawal
And looked around and waited;
So he discovered that they had killed
Or maimed so many of his horses
Only twenty-four remained.
Then he said: "Lords, if the Saracens
Dance this dance much longer
We will all be on foot, it is certain.
We must try some other plan.
Weary we are, and it is hot,
So we cannot travel on foot.
Let everyone take up spear or lance,
And let us quickly rush them
All together and in tight ranks.
If we can close with them,
They'll scatter like goats,
And we can cut them down on our terms."
Then every man took up his lance,
And the king launched such a
Fierce assault that in a brief while
They were put in disorder.
Arrows and armor did not avail them,
For they were undone and killed,
And God certainly did this,
Who granted him—and it's true
—Favor, praise, honor, and victory.
So many had been killed near the rocks
That they could not ride there.
Whoever could flee did flee,
Yet the king followed no further.
For he saw himself reproached
That he had advanced this far.

He returned to Layas,
The good king who hated inaction.
When he arrived there, he set about assaulting
The fortress, yet failed
Because his men were spent,
Weary, tired, and beaten down
With the fighting and great heat.
And they had but little food.

et li sarrazin qui estoient
en chastel bien se deffendoient
mais la ville arse et si destruite
fu quelle ne vaut une truite
quant li roys vit quil avesprist
.i. brief conseil a ses gens prist
et dist signeurs li vespres vient cccliiiV
es nes retraire nous couvient
si que tantost se recueillirent
sa gent · et es nes retreirent
et leurs chevaus et leur pietaille
qui volentiers le font sans faille
et li bons roys qui bien veoit
que la profiter ne pooit
a un autre port sen ala
qui estoit assez pres de la
la sejourna .viii. jours entiers
avec sa gent qui volentiers
faisoient et se reposoient
car moult grant mestier en avoient
la li bons roys que dieus aye
atendoit le roy dermenie
et ses messages li manda
et au partir leur commanda
quil li deissent quil venist
et que couvenant li tenist
et venist a tout son effort
pour li faire aide et confort
quar il est venus comme amis
einsi comme il li a promis

Quant ce vint au chief des .viii. jours
au roy ennuia li sejours
pour ce que le roy dermenie
par devers lui ne venoit mie
et pour liver qui aprochoit
et au cuer forment li touchoit
si quil li vint .i. accident
quil faut quen pais doccident
voist briefment au pape parler
vezci la cause a droit parler
il wet empetrer .i. succide
aucun confort aucune aide
pour la sainte crestiente
ou son cuer a mis et ente
et pour les sarrazins destruire
vive tels roys et ja ne muire
qui ne wet ne quiert ne pourchasse

And the Saracens who were
In the castle defended themselves well.
But he fired the town, which was
So destroyed it wasn't worth a trout.
When the king saw night approaching,
He called a brief council with his men
And said: "Lords, evening comes,
And we should withdraw to the ships."
So his men assembled at once
And went back inside their vessels
With their horses and footmen,
Who no doubt did so willingly.
And the good king, who saw well
He could do no good in that place,
Journeyed on to another port
That was rather close nearby.
There he stayed eight full days
With his army, who were willing
To do so, and who rested
Because they very much needed to do so.
In that place the good king—and God help him!
—Awaited the king of Armenia.
He sent him messengers
And ordered them at their departure
To tell him that he had arrived
And had kept his agreement with him
And that he had come with his full force
To afford him assistance and help,
For he had come as his friend,
Just as he had promised him.

When eight days had come to an end,
The delay began to annoy the king,
For the king of Armenia
Had not appeared before him
And also because winter was approaching,
And this troubled him deeply at heart.
And then an event came to pass
So he had to go the land of the West
For a short while to speak to the pope.
And here's the reason, to put it right.
He was hoping to obtain monies,
Any kind of comfort or help
For holy Christianity,
To which he'd given and devoted his heart;
And also to destroy the Saracens.
Long live such a king! May he never die,
Who does not desire, or seek out, or wish for

autre deduit ne autre chasse
fors damagier ses annemis
et sest courtois a ses amis
lors se parti et si sadresse
vers chypre la plus droite adresse
tant a nagie quen chypre vint
et la sejourner le couvint
pour ses gens darmes reposer
et vous devez bien supposer
que moult y avoit de bleciez
de lassez et de travilliez
et pour ses chevaus mettre a point
qui estoient en petit point
aussi avoit fait li bons roys
maintes saillies mains conrois
et autres armees menues
qui ne sont pas ci contenues
car trop longue chose seroit
qui toutes les y meteroit
et anuier porroit au lire
qui toutes les vorroit escrire

Or querez un roy qui ce face
na qui dieux doint si belle grace
quades .c. contre .i. se combat
et sa victoire ou quil sembat
a dire est que si annemy
sont .c. pour .i. encontre li
or parlons des fais dalixandre
et dector qui ne fu pas mendre
des autres preus qui ont este
que jai ci devant recite
comment que homme donneur na tant
comme ot hector le combatant
mais qui bien raison li feroit
des .ix. preus .x^mes^. seroit
si que je li adjousteray
quant ce livre parfineray
quil est preudons et sest estables
lies · larges · loiaus · veritables
justes · sages · bien avisez
et si tres bien le devisez
en tout est de si bon affaire cccliiiiR
com nature puet home faire
asses vous en deviseroie
mais jamais dire ne porroie
le bien lonneur le sens le pris
qui sont en sa bonte compris

Any other delight or pursuit
Save harming his enemies!
And he treats his friends with courtesy.
Then he departed and made his way
To Cyprus by the shortest route,
Sailed until he arrived at Cyprus,
And there he had to spend some time
In order to rest his men at arms
(And you should consider well
That he had many wounded,
Many men tired or spent)
And in order to care for his horses,
Which were in bad shape.
In addition, this good king launched
Many attacks, many raids,
Many smaller armed expeditions
That are not here included.
For the tale would be too long
Were all of these mentioned,
And to read such things might be tiresome
Even for the man eager to write them down.

Now find me a king who might do such a thing,
Or on whom God bestowed such great favor
He could fight with the odds a hundred to one
And has brought away the victory wherever he made war.
We must report that his enemies
Truly numbered a hundred against his one.
Let us speak of the deeds of Alexander
And Hector, for he was hardly inferior,
And the other valiant men that have lived
And who were mentioned by me earlier;
Though no man has as much honor
As Hector the fighting warrior did possess,
Even so any man who followed reason
Would make him the tenth of the nine worthies.
And so I'll add him to them
When I bring this work to completion
Because he is valiant and trustworthy,
Affable, generous, loyal, and truthful,
Fair, wise, well advised;
And if you were to describe him fairly,
In all things he is as worthy a man
As Nature could create.
I could continue describing him,
Yet never could I relate
The goodness, the honor, the intelligence,
And the worthiness that constituted his virtue.

Li nobles roys qui na pareil
en chypre fist son appareil
tel comme il faut a si grant homme
car il sen vuet aler a romme
nautre chose ni va querir
fors au saint pere requerir
quil ottrie .i. commun passage
car faire vuet le saint voiage
la vuet il mettre corps et mise
tout en lonneur de sainte eglise
a la gloire et protection
de la foy · car sentencion
nest · que de la toudis accroistre
entre les mondains et en cloistre
li roys en galee monta
en mer nen terre narresta
se petit non · tant fu engrant
de venir a romme la grant
a lentree mains cardinaus
monterent dessus leurs chevaus
et a lencontre li alerent
et puis au pape le menerent
et quant li papes la veu
son estat li a tant pleu
que tres grant chiere li a fait
de cuer de pensee et de fait
il fist sa supplication
si que consideration
ot le pape au petit estat
ou la crestiente estat
si li dist tribulations
mortalitez occisions
compaingnes regnent et pechiez
dont li mondes est entechies
si que bon ne me samble mie
que le passage vous ottrie
quant a present · car ce seroit
tres grans peris qui le feroit
car pechiez nuit et sest po gent
et tuit seigneur ont a present
trop de riotes et de plais
mais qui les porroit mettre en pais
moult volentiers acorderoie
le pelerinage et si yroie
quen verite je le desir
tant que cest mon plus grant desir
mais ce ne seroit pas profit
cest la response quil li fit

This noble king, who has no rival,
Made preparations in Cyprus
That suited a man of his rank,
For he intended journeying to Rome.
Nothing else did he seek there
Except imploring the Holy Father
To authorize a general passage.
For he wished himself to make the holy pilgrimage.
To this he'd devote his energies and person,
All to the honor of holy church,
To the glory and protection of
The faith because his goal was
Nothing except its continual flourishing
For both the worldly and the cloistered.
The king embarked on his ship,
Halting but little on land
Or sea, so intent was he
On journeying to Rome the great.
Upon his arrival many cardinals
Mounted their horses
And rode out to meet the king,
Afterward escorted him to the pope.
And when he saw him, the pope
Was so impressed by the man's appearance
He offered him a very hearty welcome
With what he said and did.
He made his appeal,
And so that pope gave thought to
The quite difficult straits
Christianity found itself in.
And he told him: "Tribulation,
Pestilence, murder, sin,
And the companies hold sway,
And this afflicts the world.
And so I don't think it good
To grant a passage to you
For the present since the danger
Would be too great for any man attempting it,
For sin does murder now and is hardly kind,
And all the lords at this time
Have too many troubles and disputes.
But should someone bring peace to these,
I would quite willingly authorize
A passage, even go along myself
Because my desire is truly so strong
To do so that it's my most fervent wish.
But nothing would be gained."
That's how he answered him.

Encor y a une autre chose
biaus fils vraiement je suppose
que qui sagement traiteroit
au soudan · quil acorderoit
legierement .i. bon acort
si que je conseille et acort
que nous prenons gens couvenables
sages · avisez · et traitables
et que tres bien les enfourmons
et au soudan ses envoions
mais einsois leur couvient avoir
procuration et povoir
de vous · pour vous · en vostre nom
dacorder · sil vous samble bon
il nen sera qua vostre vueil
li roys respondi je le vueil
car je sui seins de tele corde
que quan quil vous plaist je lacorde
et tout vostre voloir feray
en tout cas tant com vis seray
car je vous doy oubeissance
foy pais honneur et reverence
et pour ce que marcheandise
estoit toute perdue a pyse
a venise a romme et a gennes
de dras dor · de soie et de pennes
davoir de pois despisserie
et ensement en rommenie
en puille · en calabre · en sesille cccliiiiV
et en mainte autre bonne ville
pluseurs citez tramis avoient
au saint pere et li supplioient
tres humblement que bon acort
mettre li plust en descort
dou roy de chypre et dou soudan
car se li descors dure un an
il dient en leur verite
que toute la crestiente
en vaurra pis notablement
si que li papes sagement
dou gre dou roy ordena la
que de chascune ville ala
vers le soudan une personne
notable · diligent et bonne
questre doivent embassadeurs
de la pais et mediateurs
entre le soudan et le roy
qui se combat pour nostre foy
et li roys pooir leur donna

"There's yet another reason,
Sweet son; I truly believe
That a man who negotiated wisely
With the sultan would come easily
To a satisfactory agreement.
And so I urge and advise
That we choose suitable men
Who are wise, crafty, and persuasive
And that we carefully instruct them
And dispatch them to the sultan.
But these men must be
Procurators with powers granted from you
For you, to come in your name to an
Agreement—should it seem good to you.
Only if you agree will this happen."
The king replied: "This is what I want
Because I am backed into such a corner
That I will agree to whatever pleases you.
And your wishes I will always
Carry out as long as I live
Because I owe you obedience,
Faith, compliance, honor, and reverence."
And because the trading had come
To a complete halt at Pisa,
At Venice, at Rome, and at Genoa,
That in gold cloth, silk, and feathers,
Condiments, spices,
And so forth in the Romagna,
In Apulia, Calabria, Seville,
And many another fine town.
Several cities had sent embassies
To the Holy Father, and they asked him
Quite respectfully if he might be pleased
Should an advantageous treaty settle the dispute
Between the king of Cyprus and the sultan.
For if the trouble lasted a year,
It was the pure truth, they said,
That all those in Christendom
Would suffer most significantly.
And so the pope wisely
Ordained—with the king's blessing
—That from every city
A notable, diligent, and
Dependable man should travel to the sultan,
And these men should act as ambassadors
For peace and mediators
Between the sultan and the king,
Who was fighting for our faith.
And the king granted them the powers

tel com li papes ordonna
et promist en case quil iront
il tenra tout ce quil feront
devers le soudan en alerent
et a son conseil besongnierent
si bien · que bon acors fust fais
de tous debas de tous meffais
et des .ii. pars fust acorde
escript · et seele · et jure
chascuns seur sa loy lafferma
et li soudans la conferma
li messagier sont retourne
qui nont mie trop sejourne
si ont fait leur relation
et dit en leur conclusion
de la pais toute la maniere
li rois en fist moult bonne chiere
quelle li estoit profitable
et tres grandement honnourable
pour lui et pour tout son pais
et aussi pour tous ses amis

Li roys se parti de la court
mais sa renommee qui court
par tous pais par tous chemins
lessaussa tant que les hermins
lont pour leur signeur esleu
pris et nomme et receu
nompas en sa propre personne
mais chascuns deaus sa vois li donne
a tous jours perpetuelment
et de commun assentement
et par coy la chose ait duree
tuit li milleur de la contree
et les villes lont seele
par leur foy et par leur seele
tous ensamble · cest assavoir
que cest au roy et a son hoir
et les clez des mieudres fortresses
qui dou pais sont plus maistresses
ont baillie au prince son frere
par quoy la chose soit plus clere
et sen a la possession
paisible · sans rebellion
et tient toute la signourie
dou bon royaume dermenie
pour le roy qui procheinnement
y sera · sil puet nullement
quant li roys oy la nouvelle

That the pope had recommended,
And should they go, he promised
To honor whatever was agreed upon.
They went to the sultan
And negotiated according to the king's instructions
So ably that a good treaty was drafted
To cover all questions of friendship and injury,
And it was endorsed by both sides,
Written down, sealed, and sworn to.
Every man bore witness according to his law,
And the sultan agreed as well.
The messengers returned,
Who had not remained there long.
And they recounted their doings,
And said, by way of conclusion,
What all the terms of peace were.
The king seemed quite pleased
Because it favored him;
And it did great honor to
Him and all his countrymen,
And to his friends as well.

The king departed from the papal court.
But his renown, which spread
Through every land by every route,
So exalted him that the Armenians
Elected him to be their king,
Nominated, chose, and accepted him,
But not when he was present;
Rather each man among them gave his verbal assent
To him from that point on in perpetuity
By agreement of all in common.
And so that this would endure,
All the important people in the countryside
And towns put their seal to the document,
Upon their faith and with their mark,
All in unison, meaning this for
Both the king and his heir.
And the keys to the more important strongholds,
Which were the most impregnable in the land,
Were handed over to his brother the prince
So that everything would be quite clear.
In this way he took possession
Peaceably and without any rebellion,
And he assumed all lordship
Over the good kingdom of Armenia
On behalf of the king who soon
Would be present were he readily able to do so.
When the king heard the news,

moult li fu plaisant et nouvelle
dun tel royaume conquerir
sans labour et sans cop ferir
si que li roys sachemina
et tant haste son chemin a
quen la cite vint de venise
ou on laimme forment et prise
li roys ni fist pas lonc sejour
car .i. dimanche au point dou jour
a grant joie et a grant deduit
lan mil .ccc. .lxviii.
se parti moult bien men remembre
.xxviii. jours dedens septembre
pour aler faire lordenance ccclvR
dou pais et la gouvernance
qui a son hoir · li est donnez
ligement et abandonnez
mais einsois que li roys de pris
partist de court · com bien apris
a nostre saint pere parla
dune autre besongne · car la
estoit le signeur de lesparre
qui sa bouche pas bien ne barre
car sil leust tres bien barree
et de sylence seelee
il neust pas dit les paroles
quon tint pour nices et pour foles
quil avoit parle rudement
au roy de chypre · et folement
et en champ lavoit appelle
qui ne doit pas estre cele
si sen desdit et escondit
si com vous lorrez par mon dit
present le pape et maint preudomme
qui estoient a court de romme
vesa pour quoy je le diray
et ja ne vous en mentiray
car verite ne quiert nuls angles
nelle na que faire de jangles

Je vous afferme loyaument
que quant il vint premierement
devers le roy · li roys li fit
honneur courtoisie et profit
autant comme sil fust son frere
engendres de pere et de mere
en ses armees le menoit
et si pres de lui le tenoit
quen li avoit droit fiance

The king found it quite pleasant and unusual
To conquer such a kingdom
With no effort and not striking a single blow.
And so the king took to the road,
And hastened so in his travels
That he arrived in the city of Venice,
Where he was loved and greatly esteemed.
The king did not remain long,
But one Sunday at daybreak,
With great joy and much celebration,
In the year thirteen hundred and sixty-eight
He departed, as well I recall,
On the twenty-eighth of September,
In order to take charge of putting the treaty
In force and assuming the lordship
That had been given, granted,
And bestowed upon him as his inheritance.
But before the worthy monarch
Left the court, like a wise man
He spoke to our Holy Father
About another matter, for there present
Was the lord of Lesparre,
Who didn't discreetly shut his mouth,
For if he had properly kept it closed
And sealed with his silence,
He would never have spoken words
That were thought silly and foolish;
For he did address the king
Of Cyprus insultingly and madly
And called him out to the field of battle,
Which should not be kept secret.
Now he slandered and demeaned the king,
As you will hear in my work,
In the presence of the pope
And many worthy men at the court of Rome.
And here is why I will recount this matter,
For I will tell you no lies: it is because
The truth seeks the straight and narrow
And will not brook idle talk.

On my honor, I pledge you
That when this man first came
To the king, the king treated him
Honorably, courteously, and to his advantage
Just as if he had been his own brother,
Born from the same mother and father.
And he made him part of his army
And kept him close by his side
Because he had real faith

de sonneur · et de sa chevance
or est certein comme evangile
que dou quaire jusqua sebille
na homme qui sache dou fait
darmes · tant comme li roys fait
si que par samblance lamoit
et son droit signeur le clamoit
car honneur et chevalerie
aprenoit en sa compaingnie
et en tous biens en amendoit
si bien · que mieux ne demandoit

Quant triple fu prise et gastee
li roys fist une grant armee
li sires de lesparre vint
o li gens darmes plus de vint
et voloit entrer en galee
li roys li deffendi lentree
et dist que ja ni entreroit
avec li · einsois demorroit
car des gages estoit quassez
et savoit gens darmes assez
encor li dist il autre chose
que pas ne vueil qui soit enclose
present contes et chevaliers
et gens darmes et escuiers
sire de lesparre servi
mavez · que bien ay desservi
et se je vous doy rien · paier
vous vueil tantost sans delaier
mais cure nay de vo service
car trop y ay dangier et vice
se la cause dire voloie
pour quoy ce fu · je ne saroie
car par ma foy je ne le say
nencor oy dire ne lay
li sires de lesparre dit
quil fait mal qui li contredit
daler nostre signeur servir
et quil len devroit requerir
puis quil en a devotion
et que cest grant confusion
et que dieu courresce et offent
quant son service li deffent
car a saoul et a geun
son digne service est commun
en tous cas a tous et a toutes
de ce ne fait il nulles doubtes
li roys se parti sans plus dire

In both his honor and his ability.
Now it's as true as the gospel itself
That from Cairo to Seville
No man knows as much
About feats of arms as does the king.
And so this man seemed to love him,
Called him his true lord
Because he did learn honor
And chivalry at the his side;
And with every benefit he rewarded him
So greatly the man did not ask for better.

After Tripoli had been captured and laid waste,
The king raised a huge army.
The lord of Lesparre came
With more than twenty men at arms,
And he was eager to embark on a galley.
The king forbid him access
And said the man would not accompany
Him but he should remain behind
Because he, the king, had little wages
And already had sufficient men at arms.
Now he told him something else
That I don't wish kept secret
In the presence of the counts and knights,
The men at arms and squires too:
"Lord of Lesparre, you've done me
Service for which I've well rewarded you,
And if I owe you anything, I'd like
To pay you at once without any delay.
But I have no desire for your service,
For I find it too arrogant and improper."
If I cared to explain why
This was the case, I could not,
For upon my faith I don't know,
Nor have I ever heard it discussed.
The lord of Lesparre answered
That the king did wrong to prevent him
From going to serve Our Lord.
And this was something He should require of him,
For he had a devotion thereto;
And that it was very shameful
And angered, also offended God
When he forbid him to perform His service;
For in feast and famine,
Devoted service to Him was open to all people,
Men and women alike, in every circumstance.
Of this he had no doubt.
Without saying another word, the king departed

et li autres avoit tant dire
qua peinnes que la ne moroit ccclvV
pour de quen chypre demouroit
et quant li sires de lesparre
vit quil gisoit seur tele quarre
que chascun qui honneur voloit
avec le bon roy sen aloit
et il estoit seuls reservez
a po quil ne fu tous dervez
si sen ala en son hostel
a tel dueil quonques homs not tel
si que toute la nuit pensa
et landemain contrepensa
quil feroit ne quil devenroit
et quel fin la chose penroit
si savisa finablement
pour lui vengier plus hautement
pleins de forsen et de desroy
quen champ appelleroit le roy
pour li combatre corps a corps
a li · la fu tous ses acors
moult considera quil feroit
et quel part il lappelleroit
car il desire avoir tel juge
a son pooir qui pour li juge
et quil soit a li favourables
dous et courtois et amiables
si quen son cuer determina
finablement et ordonna
quen la court le roy dengleterre
de qui je croy quil tient sa terre
mettroit a fin ceste besongne
car li chevaliers de gascongne
est nez · et norris · et attrais
et pour ce sest ses cuers la trais

Et sil ne le puet avoir la
en autre court lappellera
ce sera en la court le prince
qui de gales tient la province
et qui se dit duz de guienne
qui na pas toudis este sienne
et se la ne le puet ataindre
au roy de france sira pleindre
et en sa court li metera
sil puet · et si combatera
de hache de glaive ou despee
ce fu la fin de sa pensee
quant il ot merencolie

While the other man was so mortified
He nearly died there and then
Because he had to remain in Cyprus.
And when the lord of Lesparre
Realized the difficulty he was in,
Namely that every man seeking honor
Was going along with the king,
And he alone had been left behind,
He nearly went out of his mind.
So he returned to his dwelling
More miserable than any man had ever been.
And so he thought all night long,
The next morning considered even further
What he would do or what would become of him,
And what conclusion this matter might have.
In the end he decided,
Filled with anger and confusion,
To seek the ultimate revenge,
Namely to call the king out
To single combat, hand to hand,
On the field of honor. Such was the whole of his plan.
He thought hard what he would do
And where to challenge him,
For he was eager to obtain, as best he could,
A judge to rule in his favor
Who would be sympathetic,
Polite, courteous, and friendly.
And finally in his heart
He decided and determined
That at the court of the king of England
From whom, I believe, he held his land
—He would resolve this issue.
For the knight had been born in Gascony,
Brought up and raised there,
So this is where his heart drew him.

And if he could not have him there,
He would challenge the king at another court.
This would be at the court of the prince
Who holds Wales as his province,
Who calls himself the duke of Guienne
Which has not always been his.
And if unable to get satisfaction there,
He would go complain to the king of France
And put this matter before his court
If he could; and he'd do combat
With the ax, lance, and sword.
Such was the sum of his intent.
After he had lamented,

pense · muse · et colie ·
tant quil ne savoit mais que dire
tantost fist une lettre escrire
moult bien la seela et ploia
et au gentil roy lenvoia
vesci la teneur de la lettre
car je ni vueil oster ne mettre

Vesa la superscription de la lettre que le signeur de lesparre envoia au roy de chypre ·

A mon tres honnoure et tres redoubte seigneur · le roy de jherusalem et de chypre

La teneur de la lettre fu tele

Mon honnoure et tres redoubte signeur · vous savez bien comment vous menvoiastes querir en constant par vos lettres · et par messires bremont de la vote · que je vous venisse servir et je qui cuidoie en vous trouver .i. bon signeur · et comme celui qui y estoie tenus vins a vostre mandement · et si vous ay servi par lespasse de .x. moys entiers ou plus · des quels je vous ay servi les .vi. a mes coustanges et de .iiii. aus vostres · et si vous ay servi le mieux et le plus honnourablement que jay peu et sceu · or est einsi que depuis un po de tens en sa vous avez pris merencolie seur moy · ou par faus rapport · ou par vostre volente ne say le quel · [ccclviR] assez de foys vous ay dit et prie · quil vous pleust a moy dire pour quoy vous me partez malivolence · ne se aucuns vous avoit raporte aucune chose de moy qui fust contre vostre honneur · ou la moie · car se ainsi estoit que nuls le vous heust raporte · je estoie prest de moy descuser par devant vous · en disant que il avoit menti faussement et mauvaisement · et que je men deffenderoie par mon corps einsi comme .i. chevalier se doit deffendre en gardant son honnour · et outre ce le vous ay je fait dire par le prince vostre frere · par le conte de herford · et par larcevesque · et aussi le vous ay je dit autrefois par devant le dit conte de herford · et messires perceval estant en rodes hors de vostre royaume · et ·onques nay trouve homme qui mait dit que jeusse fait chose qui tournast contre mon honnour · si que desormais je men tien pour desencuse · et tien que jay fait ce que un droit et loial chevalier doit faire · et quant au fait de la lettre en la quele je vous estoie tenus · je la pense bien avoit accomplie tellement comme je doy · car je vous ay fait presenter par le maistre de lospital · et par le conte de herford que jestoie prest · daler en ceste presente armee · et de vous tenir tout ce que je vous avoie promis · en cas que vous me tenries aussi tout ce que vous maves promis · et vous leur avez respondu que vous ne volies que je y alasse · et que en cas que je yroie vous me feries faire

Thought about, considered, and meditated upon this
Until he hardly knew what more to say;
He had a letter written at once;
He sealed and folded it quite securely
And sent it to the noble king.
Here follows the substance of this letter.
For I intend leaving out or adding nothing.

Here's the salutation of the letter that the lord of Lesparre sent to the king of Cyprus.

To my very honored and well respected lord, the king of Jerusalem and Cyprus

This was the tenor of his letter.

My very honored and well respected lord, you know well how you sent to have me sought out in Constantine [a city in Cyprus—trans. note] by your letter and by my lord Brémont de la Voulte, so that I might come to serve you. And I, who believed to find you a good lord, and like a man who intends holding to such a bond, came at your invitation. And I have been in your service for the period of ten whole months, maybe longer; such service was at my expense for six months and at yours for four. And I have served you as honorably and as ably as I have been able or could do. Now it has happened that just recently you became angry with me because of a false report, or because this was your design, which I do not know. Many times I've asked and begged you to please tell me why you bear me ill will, if someone has said anything about me that offends your honor or my own. For if anyone had reported such a thing, I was ready to deny it in your presence, saying that he has lied falsely and maliciously; and that I would defend this with my body, just as any knight should defend himself to protect his honor. In addition, I have had this matter brought up to you by the prince, your brother, by the count of Hereford, and by the archbishop. Also, previously, I had it brought up to you by the aforesaid count of Hereford and by my lord Perceval while they were in Rhodes, outside your kingdom. And I have never found any man to tell me that I had done something to compromise my honor. So I consider myself justified in this matter and maintain that I have done what a true and loyal knight should do. And in regard to the letter that bound me to you, I think very much to have done just as I should have, for I made it known to you by the master of the Hospital and by the count of Hereford that I was ready to go along as part of this present army and to accomplish for you everything I had agreed to do, providing that you held to the terms of the agreement as well. And you answered them that you did not wish for me to go

damage et deshonnour · de la quele chose · certes vous me faisies grant tort · car le service de dieu est commun · et vous ne le deussiez mie deffendre a nul crestien · especiaument a moy considere le service que je vous ay fait · et toutes les autres choses contenues es dittes lettres · je les ay si bien acomplies a mon avis que des ores en avant jen doy estre tenus pour desencuse · et puis queinsi est que je voy clerement · que vous volez dou tout mon deshonnour et mon damage · je maquite de vous et men desiste des ores en avant · et vueil que vous sachiez que des ores mais je oseray autant pourchacier vostre deshonnour comme vous ferez la moie · et pourchasseray a mon pooir · non obstant que je vous heusse dit que je vous serviroie volentiers tous les jours de ma vie tant comme je congnoisteroie que mon service vous pleust · mais ore voy je bien que il ne vous plaist plus · et pour ce je men acquitte et vueil faire le contraire · dieux vous rende le guerredon selonc les merites · escript en rodes · le .iii^{e}. jour daoust

le sire de lesparre

Une autre lettre estoit enclose
en ceste ci qui portoit glose
dont li bons roys moult se merveille
et je aussi en ay grant merveille
quelle notoit gaaing ou perte
sestoit seelee et ouverte

Et vesci la teneur des lettres qui estoient ouvertes et encloses dedens les premieres · et seelees dou seel le signeur de lesparre [ccclviV]

Pierre de lisignan roy de chypre · je florimont sires de lesparre vous fais savoir que assez de fois je vous ay oy dire .ii. choses · li une si est que vous ne mentistes onques · et lautre si est que se nuls vous chargoit de riens contre vostre honneur · que vous vous en deffenderies par devant le roy de france · je vous di que aucunes couvenances les queles vous mavies · vous mavez menti faussement et mauvaisement et se vous volez dire le contraire je le vous prouveray par mon corps contre le vostre par devant le roy dengleterre mon signeur · ou par devant mon signeur le prince de guienne son fil · ou par devant le roy de france le quel que vous vorrez de ces .iii. · et pour ce que vous ne vous puissiez mie desencuser que vous ne puissez estre par devant lun des .iii. je vous dong terme de la s. michiel prochain venant jusques a .i. an et si me faites savoir devant le quel vous volez estre de ces .iii. je y seray · et ne vous desencusez mie que je ne soie assez gentils hom pour vous combatre · car je me tien aussi gentis homs de pere et de mere comme vous estes · et en vous na de noblesse plus quen moy fors que vous avez une coronne de roy · la quelle jay oy dire a mains

along, and that if I did go you would see to it that I was shamed and dishonored; in regard to which you have greatly wronged me, it is certain, for serving God is open to all and you should not forbid it to any Christian, especially me, considering the service I have done for you. And all the other terms of the agreement I think to have carried out ably enough at the present time to be considered absolved of wrongdoing. And since matters are such—I see this clearly—that you intend in all things my shame and dishonor, I now leave your service and will do no more from this day forward. And I want you to know that from now on I will dare seek your dishonor as much as you seek my own. And I will pursue this to the best of my ability, despite my former pledge to serve you willingly all the days of my life as long as I knew that my service pleased you. Yet I see well now that it pleases you no longer, and so I withdraw from this agreement and intend doing the opposite. May God give you the reward you deserve! Written in Rhodes, the third day of August.

The lord of Lesparre

Another letter was enclosed
Within this one that bears comment,
At which the good king greatly marveled,
And I find it quite unusual myself
That it led to neither profit nor loss,
And it was open and bore a seal.

And here is the substance of the letter that was open and enclosed inside the first and sealed with the seal of the lord of Lesparre:

Pierre of Lusignan, king of Cyprus, I Florimont, lord of Lesparre, call to your attention that many times I have heard two things: the first is that you never lie; and the second is that no one might attack your honor without your defending it in the presence of the king of France. I tell you that in the several agreements you have made with me you have lied falsely and maliciously. And if you wish to maintain the contrary, I will prove it to you with my body against yours in the presence of the king of England, my lord, or in the presence of the duke of Guienne, his son, or in the presence of the king of France, whomever of these three you choose. And since you will not prove able to justify yourself in this matter unless you appear before one of these three, I will set the date as a year from this coming Michaelmas. And if you will let me know which of the three it will be, I will be there. And do not justify yourself by maintaining I am not noble enough a man to fight against you, for I consider myself as noble a person, on both my mother's and father's sides, as are you. And so there's no more nobility in you than in me, except that you wear a king's crown, concerning which

preus hommes que nuls homs nest dignes de la porter qui soit faus et mauvais et mensongier · si comme vous estes · si me faites response se vous volez maintenir le contraire ou non dedens le dit terme dou noel · escript en rodes le quars jour daoust lan de la nativite nostre signeur mil .ccc. .lxvii.

Quant li bons roys les lettres vit
savez comment il se chevit
il les ouvri et prist a lire
et puis commensa a sousrire
et dist quil ne li en chaloit
se plus servir ne le voloit
et quaussi ne le vuet il mie
si que bonne est la departie
mais ce forment li desplaisoit
que rudement li escrisoit
et quil li disoit villenie
ce que faire ne deust mie
si pensa longuement sans faille
quant il vit quen champ de bataille
estoit appellez tellement
lors son conseil isnellement
manda pour savoir quil feroit
et comment il responderoit
comment quil fust tous consilliez
car mieus amast estre essilliez
qua sonneur ne li respondist
quel que chose quon li deist
chascuns dist son opinion
mais la vraie conclusion
fu qua li se combateroit
et que briefment li escriroit
li gentis roys qui fu preudons
au messagier donna preu dons
nonques il ne sen conseilla
et puis ses lettres li bailla
vesci la lettre toute entiere
qui commence en tele maniere

Cest la teneur de la lettre que le roy envoia pour response au signeur de lesparre

De par le roy de jherusalem et de chypre

Florimont sire de lesparre nous avons receu et veu unes lettres les queles nous avez envoies · et quant est de ce que escript nous avez que la response des dittes lettres vous envoions dedens la

I've heard said by many worthy men that no man is worthy of wearing one if he is false and evil-minded and a liar—as are you. And give me an answer, whether you agree or not, within the aforesaid period of Christmastide. Written at Rhodes, the fourth day of August, in the year thirteen hundred and sixty-seven since the birth of our Lord, Jesus Christ.

When the good king saw this letter,
Do you know what he did?
He opened it and began to read
And then started to smile
As he said it mattered not to him
Whether this man continued his service,
Which he no longer desired in any case.
And so this departure is a good thing.
Yet he was very displeased
That the man had written so insultingly,
And had said vile things to him,
Which he should not do in any way,
And then, without fail, he thought a long time
When he saw this man had summoned him
To the field of honor in such a way.
Afterward he quickly assembled his council
So that he might learn what he should do
And how he ought to respond,
Though he had already firmly decided,
For he would have preferred exile
To not answering a challenge
Some man had made to his honor.
Every man spoke his mind,
But the proper conclusion
Was that he should offer battle
And write at once to this effect.
The noble king, who was a worthy man,
Bestowed rich gifts on the messenger,
Nor he mull this over at any time,
And then entrusted the man with this letter.
Here is the whole letter,
Which begins thus:

This is the substance of the letter that the king sent as a response to the lord of Lesparre.

From the king of Jerusalem and Cyprus.

Florimont, lord of Lesparre, we have received and looked over the letters you have sent us. And since in these you have written that the aforesaid letters require an answer by the time of

feste de noel prochain venant · [ccclviiR] savoir vous faisons que nous si comme le savez sommes au present seur nostre armee au saint service de dieu · mais sachiez que nous par la grace de dieu retournant de larmee · vous dedens la saint michiel qui sera de la saint michiel prochain venant en un an trouverez a la court dou roy de france qui vous respondera si comme il et vous affiert · en tele maniere que jamais navrez volente descrire a roy crestien par la maniere que escript nous avez · escript a nostre hostel dou quid le .xv^{e}. jour de septembre lan mil .ccc. .lxvii. de la nativite nostre signeur jhesu crist

Dou roy se parti li messages
qui estoit avenans et sages
et sen ala devers son mestre
si li a devise tout lestre
lestablete la contenance
le bien · lonneur · et la prudence
quil a trouve en roy de chypre
nil na de damas jusqua ypre
ce dit nul homme qui le vaille
en scens · en conseil · en bataille
et quil est bon quil li escrise
doucement et par autre guise
li sires de lesparre muse
au messagier qui pas ne ruse
einsois disoit a bonnes certes
si quil li a respondu certes
la chose ne puet demourer
einsi · pour moy deshonnourer
qua tous jours mais honnis seroie
et blasmez seinsi le laissoie
car ce mocist et tant me grieve
qua po que li cuers ne me crieve
que li autre font leur honnour
et je demeure a deshonnour
et si lestoie venus querre
a grant peinne en estrange terre
a grant mise et a grant labour
et pour ce a mes cuers grant dolour

Li nobles roys frans et gentis
com diligens et ententis
a son fait et a sa besongne
hucha perceval de coulongne
si li dist moult courtoisement
perceval · vous savez comment
florimons de gage mapelle
qui est mervilleuse nouvelle

next Christmastide; we here give you notice that we, as you know, are presently at the head of our armies in the sacred service of God. But know that we, returning by the grace of God from this expedition, will be found by you on Michaelmas—one year from next Michaelmas—at the court of the king of France, who will give you such answer as you deserve, and in such a way that you will never again have the audacity to write any Christian king as you have written us. Written at our dwelling in Chiti, the fifteenth day of September, in the year one thousand and sixty-seven since the birth of Our Lord, Jesus Christ.

The messenger departed from the king,
Who was both worthy and wise,
And traveled to his lord.
And he told him all about the character,
The firmness, the demeanor,
The virtue, the honor, and the wisdom
He had found in the king of Cyprus.
Nor, he said, was there from Damascus
To Ypres any man who rivaled him in worthiness,
In intelligence, at council or in battle;
And it would be good for him to write
This man politely and in another fashion.
The Lord of Lesparre paid heed to
The messenger, who was no fool,
But instead had spoken in seriousness.
And he answered him: "Surely
The matter cannot remain as it now is,
That is to my dishonor, because from this time
Forward I'll be met with disrespect
And be scorned if I let it go this way.
Yet this is killing me and hurts so terribly
That my heart nearly breaks,
For the others are winning honor
While I remain behind in shame.
And I came to seek him out
In a strange land with much trouble,
Much effort, much toil,
And thus my heart feels great pain."

The noble king, generous and worthy,
Like a man diligent and careful
About his deeds and duties,
Summoned Perceval of Coulonges
And spoke to him with great courtesy:
"Perceval, you know that Florimont
Has challenged me to fight,
Which is a strange tiding

et pleinne de moult grant desroy
cuns chevaliers appelle .i. roy
il mesprent si villeinnement
et si tres orguilleusement
que cest la rien qui plus manoie
comment que confortez en soie
de riens ne li croist vasselages
eins est folie et grans outrages
de mettre en tel lettre sestude
il est moult pleins dingratitude
quil ne recongnoit les biens fais
que par maintes fois li ay fais
vous savez bien que je lamoie
honneur et profit li faisoie
et a tort mapelle de gage
einsi comme il feroit .i. page
et aussi en vostre presence
jai esleu le roy de france
a juge · si brief et court
combatre me vueil en sa court
la se dieux plaist me vengeray
de florimont · et tant feray
que jamais en jour de sa vie
a roy ne dira villenie
si qua paris vous en irez
et la pourveance ferez
pour nos chevaliers et no gent
et ni espargniez nor nargent
mais faites la si grandement
et si tres honnourablement ccclviiV
quil ne soit chose qui y faille
car trop seroit notable faille
sil y avoit aucun deffaut
et vous savez tout ce quil faut
a tel fait · pour ce vous en charge
de tous poins et si men descharge
mais pensez souvereinnement
quarmez soie seurement
et aussi que ma monteure
soit bonne et belle et bien seure
percevaux dist quil feroit
volentiers · au mieus quil saroit
baillier li fist cent mille livres
cils sen parti quil fu delivres
en grant estat en grant arroy
si comme consillier dou roy
tant fist qua paris est venus
ou il estoit bien congneus

And full of great misfortune,
That a knight call out a king.
So villainously has he done wrong,
And with such great arrogance,
That this is what troubles me most,
However welcome I find it.
Surely this will not increase his knightliness;
Rather it is great madness and an outrage
That he turned his mind to writing such a letter.
He is so full of ingratitude
That he does not recognize the benefits
I many times bestowed upon him.
You know well that I bore the man affection,
Acted to his honor and profit.
And he is as wrong to challenge me
As it would be for a page to do,
And in your presence too!
I have chosen the king of France
As judge and so, brief and short,
Will do my fighting at his court.
There, if God be pleased, I'll take
Revenge on Florimont and do so much
That he will never a day in his life
Address a king disrespectfully.
And so you'll go to Paris
And find accommodations there
For our knights and people,
And you will spare neither gold nor silver.
Instead, do this in such grand style
And in such a genteel fashion
That nothing might be lacking;
For it would be a notable error
Should something be forgotten.
And you know everything necessary
For such circumstances. So I put you in charge
Of everything and relieve myself of the burden.
But above all else make sure
That I am armored securely
And also that my horse is good
And handsome and a secure mount."
Perceval said that he would do this
Willingly and to the best of his ability.
The king had him given a hundred thousand pounds.
The man then departed, who was sent on
In grand array, with much pomp
In the manner of a king's advisor.
He traveled until arriving at Paris,
Where he was well known.

Li roys a la court demoura
et li papes mout lonnoura
et chascuns honneur li faisoit
qua tous et a toutes plaisoit
en fait en dit et en maniere
en port · en maintieng · et en chiere ·
et florimons y est qui chace
en toutes guises et pourchasse
quil soit quittes de son appel
ou bien porra laissier la pel ·
car cest son principal desir
qua honneur sen puist departir
et li papes de lautre part
ne fait que penser main et tart
comment il les puist acorder
si comme oy lay recorder
tous jours sont cardinal en voie
quau roy li sains peres envoie
mais pour venir ne pour aler
li roys nen volt oir parler
nonques .i. seul mot desperence
nen porterent · car sans doubtance
on ne puet en lui pais trouver
ne pour prier ne pour rouver

Quant li sains peres a veu
essaie · tempte · et sceu
que li bons roys qui tant valoit
nul acort faire ne voloit
il a dit quil le mandera
et de la pais le priera
et qua ce vuet mettre grant peinne
ce fu en la sainte semainne
que dieux pour no redemption
endura mort et pascion
li sains peres lenvoia querre
et il vint a li sans enquerre
quil li voloit · que oubeissance
li faisoit · et grant reverence
li papes par la main le prist
et les li doucement lassist
et li dist moult courtoisement
et moult tres amiablement
biaus fils il est chose certeinne
que vous avez heu grant peinne
en service nostre seigneur
de quoy li grant et li meneur
et chascuns heureus vous claimme
et je croy bien que dieux vous aimme

The king remained at the court,
And the pope honored him highly.
And every man did him honor,
For all, men and women alike, were pleased
By his deeds, his speech, his manner,
His bearing, his behavior, and his demeanor.
And there present was Florimont, who was looking for
And seeking out in various ways
Some release from his challenge,
Or he might well lose his skin.
For his chief aim was to put
This honorably behind him.
And the pope for his part
Did nothing soon or late but consider
How he could reconcile them.
As I've heard tell,
The cardinals were constantly on the move,
Whom the holy father dispatched to the king.
But despite these comings and goings,
The king would not hear it spoken of;
And they never brought away
A single hopeful word since, beyond doubt,
No desire for peace could be found in him,
Now matter how he was asked or implored.

When the holy father did see,
Had assayed, put to trial, and learned
That the good king, who was so worthy,
Did not intend to reconcile,
He said he'd send for the man
And beg him for peace,
And that he was willing to expend great effort.
This was during that holy week
When God in order to redeem us
Endured suffering and death.
The holy father ordered him sought out,
And he came to him without inquiring
What he wished because he accorded the pope
Obedience and great respect.
The pope seized his hand
And gently seated him by his side
And spoke quite courteously to him
And with much amity:
"Sweet son, certain it is
That you have suffered greatly
In the service of Our Lord,
For which those of high and low degree
To a man consider you fortunate.
And I am convinced God loves you

car il le vous a bien moustre
en lieus ou vous avez este
si que fieux je vous vueil reprendre
et en vous reprenant aprendre
que cest si mauvaise racine
de vivre en pechie de hayne
quen bien jamais ne fructefie
et pour ce est fols cils qui si fie
ne homs ne porroit son creatour
qui de tout le monde est actour
bien amer ne bien honnourer
qui en ce point vuet demourer
na droit ne le puet recevoir
vous savez bien que je di voir
et si est contre levangile
qui dit que cest chose si vile ·
de hair · et cest .i. mors tel ccclviiiR
com de vivre en pechie mortel
quon passe les commandemens
de dieu · qui est nos sacremens
dont la fin est tele sans fable
quon en pert gloire pardurable
si que biaus fils je vous diray
je vous aim tant et ameray
quen nul cas je ne vous faudroie
ne que hector fist a ceuls de troie
li sires de lesparre est cy
qui a le cuer teint et nercy
pour ce que trop vous a meffait
si amendera son meffait
a vostre gre et a mon dit
et biaus fieus vous savez quon dit
et toute raison si acorde
de pecheur misericorde
et vraiement il sen repent
mais juenesse les gens aprent
et les tient en si fol cuidier
que nuls ne le porroit cuidier
si que biaus dous fils je vous pri
pour dieu et pour lamour de my
et pour toute crestiente
quil lamende a vo volente
et pour le bon temps ou nous sommes
car je ne donroie .ii. pommes
dun homme qui ne prent amende
et recoit · quant on li amende
especiaument a sa guise
et je vous jur par sainte eglise
que vostre honneur y garderay
en tous les cas que je saray

Because He has demonstrated this to you
Readily in the places where you've been.
Now, son, I intend to reproach you,
And, by means of this reproach, teach you
That it's such an evil root
To live on in the sin of hate
That it will never appropriately bear fruit.
And so only a fool clings to it,
Nor can a man love well
Or honor rightly his Creator,
Who is the source of all that is,
When he determines to live this way.
And he cannot rightly receive Him.
You know well that I speak the truth,
And it is so contrary to the gospel,
Which says it's very evil
To hate, the same kind of death
As to live on in mortal sin,
For it violates the commandment
Of God, which is holy to us;
And its end is such—and no lies
—That the man will forfeit eternal glory.
And so, sweet son, I tell you
I love you so much now—and will
—That I would never play you false,
No more than Hector did the Trojans.
Here present is the lord of Lesparre,
Who is miserable and sad at heart
Because of the great wrong he did you.
And he'll atone for his misdeed
To your satisfaction and at my command.
And, sweet son, you know the saying
That reason endorses wholeheartedly
About having mercy on the sinner.
And truly, the man repents.
But youth sways people
And holds them in such a foolish belief
That no one could readily credit it.
And so, my sweet handsome son, I beg you
For the love of God and the love you bear me,
And for the sake of all Christendom,
That he might amend this to your liking
And because of the happy season we're in.
Now I wouldn't give two apples
For a man who wouldn't take and accept
An apology that is made to him,
Especially on his own terms.
And I swear to you by holy church
That in this matter I will protect your honor
In every way that I can."

Li roys oy bien le saint pere
qui haine moult vitupere
si que tres bien considera
comment il li respondera
il considera la parole
dou signeur qui a li parole
sa sainte et sa dignite
et sa tres grant humilite
quil li promet quil gardera
son honneur · et li sauvera
et puis la guerre dou soudan
qui li porroit faire .i. tel cran
en son pais sen france aloit
qua malaise lamenderoit
qui estoit chose moult doubteuse
aussi la semainne peneuse
li faisoit au cuer grant remort
quar dieux y pardonna sa mort
et nest par raisons quil oublie
que bons drois a mestier daye
et sest fortune perilleuse
moult souvent et si mervilleuse
que le plus haut en bas retourne
souventes fois quant elle tourne
et sara ce quil demandoit
cest honneur a plus ne tendoit
et quant il ara sa demande
fols est li homs qui plus demande
si respondi moult humblement
tres saint pere en commandement
pren et recoy vostre priere
par si que mon honneur entiere
y soit si nettement gardee
quelle ni soit en riens grevee
car je vueil a vous oubeir
en tous cas sans desoubeir
et avec ce quil le desdie
en vostre presence · et quil die
si haut que il ne le puist nier
quil me tient pour bon chevalier
en tous cas preudomme et loial
pour estre en toute court royal
et que chascuns le sache et loie
par quoy desamensongies soie
et quon ait tout premierement
dou faire son consentement
quautrement riens ne vous ottry
lors dist li papes sans detry
sans doubte je li feray faire

The king listened hard to the holy father,
Who strongly reproved hatred,
And so he very much considered
How he should answer him.
He thought about the good word
Of the lord who was speaking to him,
His holiness and his dignity,
And his very great humility too,
Who promised him that he'd preserve
His honor and keep him safe.
And then there was the war with the sultan,
Who could launch such a bold raid
On his own country if he journeyed to France,
One which he should amend with difficulty.
And this was quite risky business.
Also the penitential week
Made him very remorseful at heart,
For God had then redeemed him from death.
And it was not right for him to forget
How true justice needs assistance.
And Fortune is quite often
A dangerous and marvelous thing
Because she many times turns back
Those of highest rank when she turns;
And he'd get what he wanted,
That is, his honor. He sought nothing else,
And he'd have what he requested,
Only a fool would look for more.
So he answered quite humbly:
"Most holy father, I consider your request
A command and receive it as such
Because all my honor
Will thereby be so carefully protected
It will not be harmed at all.
For my intention is to be ruled by you
In all things, without disobeying.
And in this regard, I want him to recant it
In your presence, and he should say,
Loudly enough so he can't deny it,
That he considers me a knight who is worthy
At all times, a man brave and true,
Who belongs at any royal court.
And let everyone know and hear
Why I am to be absolved of blame.
And let it first be said
He acts of his own accord,
For otherwise I grant you nothing."
Then the holy father said without hesitating:
"You can be sure I'll have him do this

de point en point sans nul contraire
dou tout a vostre volente
queinsi le ma il creante
li roys respondi en la place
que tout son bon plaisir en face
car toute sonneur met en lui
sans penre conseil a nelui

Atant de la se departirent
si ordenerent et deirent
que la chose en ce point demeure
tant que li papes verra leure
et le temps quil les mandera
et la pais deaus pronuncera
la vigile de pasques vint
si quau pape bien en souvint
le bon roy manda qua lui veigne
et il y vint a grant compaingne
car toute sa chevalerie
toute sa gent et sa maisnie
et maint bon chevalier estrange
digne donneur · et de loange
nil navoit cardenal a romme
chevalier · bourgois ne prudomme
qui ne venist a lassamblee
que le pape avoit assamblee
et quant il furent tuit venu
grant petit moien · et menu
li sires de lesparre estoit
avec les autres qui estoit
piessa venus au mandement
dou pape · et tout premierement
et li gentils rois sans orgueil
se seoit en .i. fausdestueil
la fist une collation
le pape en grant devotion
et bien et bel · et proprement
moustra a bon entendement
comment on doit son dieu amer
et son proisme sans point damer
et comment sa mort pardonna
aus faus juif qui li donna
en costel dou fer de sa lance
et aus autres qui par sentence
sans cause a mort le condampnerent
et en crois le crucifierent
tout aussi qui vuet recevoir
le saint sacrement et avoir
lui et son cuer doit ordonner

In all respects—and no argument
—Just as you wish it to be,
For such is his promise to me."
The king answered on the spot
That he'd do whatever the pope wished
Because he trusted him with all his honor
Without seeking advice from any man.

At once they departed the place,
And so affirmed and gave the undertaking
To leave matters as they now stood
Until the pope saw the right moment
And the time for him to send for the two men
So that he might pronounce peace between them.
The night before Easter came,
And thus pope thought deeply about this matter.
He ordered him to appear before him,
And the man arrived with a great company
Because all his household knights,
All his people, all his men,
And many a foreign gentleman
Worthy of honor and praise did come too.
There was no cardinal in Rome,
No knight, burgess, or nobleman
Who did not attend the assembly
That the pope convoked.
And when they were all assembled,
The high, the lowly, those in the middle and below,
The lord of Lesparre was there
With the others, who had
Arrived some time before
And ahead of time at the pope's command.
The noble king without any arrogance
Sat down on a chair.
Then the pope gave a sermon
With great devoutness,
Well and properly and skillfully
Showed with a good understanding
How one must love his God
And his neighbor with no trace of bitterness;
How He forgave the false Jew
For His death, who struck
Him in the side with the lance's iron,
And the other men who with their sentence,
But without cause had condemned Him to die.
And they crucified Him on a cross.
Just the same, everyone who intends receiving
And taking the holy sacrament
Must direct himself and his heart,

et sa maniere a pardonner
toutes rancunes tous meffais
quon li a pourchacie et fais
li saint le faisoient jadis
pour ce ont il gloire en paradis

Quant la collation fu dite
li papes qui moult se delite
ad ce quil les puist acorder
prist devant tous a recorder
et dist einsi en audience
sire de lesparre je pense
que vous savez assez la cause
dont ceste assamblee se cause
vous avez ouvre folement
et mauvais consaus vraiement
vous a si meu que de fait
au roy de chypre avez meffait
vous li avez escript paroles
qui sont rudes nices et foles
et mauvaisement controuvees
que mar fussent elles pensees
vous lavez appelle de gage
sans nulle cause par outrage
si que vous vous en desdirez
et devant chascun li direz
quil est preudons justes · loiaus
et quonques ne fu desloiaus
et quen li nul mal ne savez
et aussi que vous le tenez
pour bon et loial chevalier
veritable ferme et entier
au neant le gage metez
et que forment vous repentez
de ce que tant en avez fait ccclixR
et pardon querez dou meffait
et vueil que vous li amendez
a genous · et plus natendez
car cest chose quil couvient faire
et qui vous est bien neccessaire

Quant il ot fine sa parole
quon ne tenoit pas pour frivole
li sires de lesparre dit
sire javoue vostre dit
et volentiers me desdiray
et de point en point tout diray
ce que vous mavez commande
car pour ce mavez vous mande

His way of thinking toward a pardon for
All misdeeds, all wrongs
Done and committed against him.
In ancient days the saints did so
And so now have glory in paradise.

When he had spoken his collation,
The pope, who delighted greatly
That he could make peace between them,
Began to speak in the presence of all
And said this loud enough to hear:
"Lord of Lesparre, I think
You know quite well the reason
This group is here assembled.
You have acted foolishly,
And truly it was evil counsel
That moved you in this instance
To wrong the king of Cyprus.
You have written him things
That are insulting, silly, and foolish,
And maliciously contrived,
Which were thought up in an evil hour.
You have challenged him to combat
For no cause and in an outrageous fashion.
And this you wish to recant,
And in front of all here present you will tell him
That he is a worthy man, fair and truthful,
And that he has never been false;
And you know of no malice in him,
Also that you consider the man
A virtuous and faithful knight,
Truthful, dependable, and unwavering.
You think the challenge nothing
And mightily repent having made
So much of the matter,
And you seek pardon for the misdeed.
Make your amends, such is my wish,
On your knees; wait no longer
Because that is what's required
And very necessary for you to do."

When he finished his speech,
Which was not thought foolish,
The lord of Lesparre said:
"Lord, I affirm what you've said
And willingly recant my words;
And I'll speak point by point
All you have commanded me
Because this is why you sent for me.

et meffait li ay par saint pere
cest bien drois que je le compere
tantost de son lieu se depart
et si sen ala ceste part
ou li gentils roys se seoit
car face a face le veoit
un petit de lui seslongna
et devant lui sagenouilla
si li a dit moult humblement
et moult tres honnourablement
monsigneur je vous ay meffait
de cuer de pensee et de fait
de volente et par escript
car mal a point vous ay escript
dont je me repen sans mentir
tant com je men puis repentir
et ce ma fait faire consaus
mauvais et traitres et faus
et se jay meffait ou mesdit
ma bouche de cuer sen desdit
et devant chascun mon appel
met au neant · et le rapel
et sil a chevalier au monde
ferme · loyal · net pur et monde
de mal · je vous vueil accepter
pour tel · sans nul autre excepter
nonques en vous nul mal ne vi
fors cuer franc donneur assevi
or sui cils qui le vous amende
sire vueilliez penre lamende
et tout mon meffait pardonner
de cuer · et vo grace donner
car je met en vostre ordenance
mon corps · mon honneur et ma chevance
et se vous di bien quil plouroit
au dire · et dou cuer souspiroit
et si parloit si baudement
que chascuns looit proprement
chascuns lentent et chascuns loit
li papes einsi le voloit

Quant il ot dit sa volente
et chascuns lot bien escoute
li sains peres au roy pria
moult a certes et dit li a
quil li vueille tout pardonner
de cuer · et sa grace donner
car il voit bien quil sen repent

And I've wronged him, by Saint Peter.
It's quite just that I make amends to him."
He left his place at once
And made his way to where
The noble king was sitting,
For he was looking at him face to face.
He kept some distance between them
And kneeled in front of him,
Then spoke to him with great humility
And in a very honorable fashion:
"My lord, I have wronged you
From the heart, in thought and deed,
Willfully and with my writing,
For what I wrote was insulting.
And, it's no lie, I repent
As much as I could repent this.
And I was moved to act by counselors
Malicious, traitorous, and false.
And if I have erred in speech or deed,
From the heart my own mouth recants it.
Before every man I say now my challenge
Is nothing and recall it.
And if there's a knight in the world
Who is dependable, loyal, pure, righteous,
And free from sin, I would maintain that you are
That man, without making any exceptions,
Nor did I ever spy malice in you,
Nothing save a generous heart full of honor.
Now it is I who make amends to you.
Sire, please accept my apology
And forgive all my wrongdoing
From the heart and bestow your favor,
For I here deliver my person,
My honor, and my destiny into your control."
And I tell you well that he was weeping
As he spoke, and he sighed from the heart.
And he spoke so loudly
That every man properly heard him,
Everyone listened, and everyone attended to him.
This was what the pope desired.

When he had said all he wished
And every man had listened well,
The holy father begged the king
Fervently, to be sure, and said to him
That he wished he'd forgive everything
In his heart and bestow his favor
Because he saw clearly that the man was sorry.

aussi font cil qui sont present
et li roy qui vit clerement
que cestoit sonneur grandement
dou pardonner li pardonna
moult bonnement et raison a
quil ne le pooit desconfire
plus aaise que de lui desdire
li papes fist venir le vin
et le confit a celle fin
que la pais fust bien affermee
de cuer · de fait et de pensee
adont florimons se dressa
et aus espices sadressa
le dragier prist et la touaille
au bon roy vint et se li baille
et a .i. genoul le servi
et encor li crie mercy
et li bons roy qui bien percut
son cuer en grace le recut
einsi fu la pais acordee
et dou saint pere confermee ·

Apres le vin et le confit ccclixV
saves vous que li bons roys fit
de toutes choses devisees
faites dites · et repliquees
a plus grant declaration
de sonneur · et punition
il prist lettres de no saint pere
ad fin qua tous jous mais appere
quil estoit purs et innocens
et li autres avoit po scens
et tort · qui appellet lavoit
de gage · chascuns le savoit

Dessus vous ay dit et compte
comment li roys pleins de bonte
voloit aler en hermenie
il fist aprester sa navie
et se parti bien men remembre
droit .xxviii. jours en septembre
et si tost quen chypre sera
la plus grant armee fera
quil porra pourchacier ne faire
pour faire aus sarrazins contraire
et au soudan principaument
quil het de cuer si mortelment
quil recommencera la guerre

And so did those who were present.
And the king, who saw clearly
That it would do him great honor
To pardon, did pardon the man
Quite willingly, and he was right
Because he could make him suffer no more
Readily than by him recanting.
The pope ordered wine brought in
And had it mixed to mark
How a firm peace had been strongly affirmed
From the heart in deed and thought.
Florimont at once got up
And busied himself with the spices,
Took the cup and a towel,
Proceeded to the king and gave him it.
And he served him on one knee
And asked forgiveness again from the man.
And the good king, who saw clearly
His heart, received it thankfully.
In this way peace was arranged
And confirmed by the holy father.

After the wine and the spiced drinks,
Do you know what the good king did?
He received a bull from our holy father
Detailing all that had been devised,
Accomplished, spoken, and reaffirmed
In this most serious declaration
About his honor and reprimanding
So that it would seem clear in the future
That he was guiltless and innocent,
And the other man had no excuse
And was wrong, who had challenged
Him—everyone did learn this.

I have described and recounted above
How the king, full of virtue,
Intended traveling to Armenia.
He had his fleet readied
And then departed, as well I remember,
Right on the 28th of September.
And as soon as he is in Cyprus,
He will assemble the biggest army
That he could raise or enlist
In order to assail the Saracens,
And especially the sultan, for whom
He bore such a mortal hatred in his heart
That he will renew the war

a son pais et a sa terre
en terre et en mer sera fors
et sera si grans ses effors
sil puet quen pais demorra
ou vraiement il y morra
car il rara son heritage
par traitie ou par vasselage

Or vous ay dit et raconte
le scens · lonneur et la bonte
le hardement la grant vaillance
les grans emprises · la prudence
la gentillesse · la noblesse
dou roy chypre · et la largesse
et comment il usa sa vie
cest bien raison que je vous die
sa fin et sa piteuse mort
dont jay souvent si grant remort
que toutes fois quil men remembre
je nay ne sanc · ne cuer · ne membre
qui ne fremisse de dolour
et quil ne pere a ma coulour
car pas ne croy que puis .c. ans
on veist prince de cent tans
faire nulle si grant emprise
selonc son pooir et sa mise
comme il fist quant il ala prendre
la forte cite dalixandre
si que sa mort vous conteray
ne ja ne vous en mentiray
einsi comme cils le ma dit
qui y estoit et qui la vit
et qui mentir ne deingneroit
ne que uns empereres feroit
car il est chevaliers de pris
sages loiaus · et bien apris
se vous moustreray par escript
ce quil men a dit et escript
mais a tous pri quil ne desplaise
a nelui · car par saint nicaise
je ne le di pas par envie
par haine · ne par lingnie
car pas ne sui de son linage
ne ne le di pour avantage
pour promesse ne pour avoir
que je nautres en doie avoir
einsois le di pour verite
si comme il le ma recite

In his lands and on his territory.
The king will be strong on land and sea
And his effort will be so great
That in the country he will remain if he can,
Or, truly, he will die there,
For he will regain his heritage
Through negotiation or knightly valor.

Now I've described and recounted to you
The wisdom, the honor, and the virtue,
The courage, the great valor,
The grand enterprises, the prudence,
The generosity, the nobility
Of the king of Cyprus, and the liberality,
And how he passed the days of his life.
So it's quite fitting I tell you
About his end and miserable death,
Which has often made me feel such great grief
That every time it comes to mind
None of the blood, heart, and limbs that are mine
Does not tremble with pain,
And this does show in my color
Because I don't believe for a hundred years
Any prince has been seen to accomplish
One hundredth as grand an enterprise
In accord with his abilities and rank
As did he when he set out to capture
The mighty city of Alexandria.
And so I'll describe his death for you,
Nor will I ever lie about anything,
Just as I was informed by a man
Who was present and bore witness,
And who would not stoop to lies,
No more than an emperor would do,
For he is a knight of high rank,
Wise, loyal, and well schooled.
And in my written account I'll pass on
What he wrote down and also told me.
But I beg everyone not to be displeased
With this account, for by St. Nicaise
I'm not speaking out of envy
Or hatred, or because of family reasons
Since I'm not a member of his line,
Nor do I say this for some advantage,
Out of any promise, or for goods
That another or I might gain thereby.
Instead I say it because it's true,
Just as he told me.

Lan mil .ccc. .ix. et sexante
en temps que froide bise vente
qui mainte fleur a decopee
par la froidure de sespee
et la terre est cointe et mignote
pour ce quelle a sa belle cote
qui est plus que nulle fleur blanche
et le gresil est seur la branche
pour la froidure de liver
que li oisillon et li ver
et mainte autre beste senterre ccclxR
lune es maisons lautre en la terre
droit de janvier le jour .xvi.e
et environ leure .xv.e
de la nuit · fu a nicossie
de sa plus procheinne lignie
et des nobles de son pais
li nobles roys de chypre ocis
en sa chambres sous sa courtine
nus gisans deles la royne
et li feirent bien .xl.
plaies · voire plus de .l.
ce me dit messires gautiers
de confflans · non pas seul · moy tiers
quil en y avoit plus de .xx.
et sestoit la ou tout ce avint
et dist quil sen combateroit
en champ · qui li debateroit
mais ja ne men debateray
nen champ ne men combateray
pour ce quen france et en lempire
meschiet bien souvent pour voir dire
et vesci toute la maniere
comment mors fu et mis en biere

Sa mort estoit ja pourparlee
de ses annemis et juree
qui estoient dune aliance
einsois quonques alast en france
.i. chevalier laissie avoit
en son pais qui bien savoit
comment on le voloit tuer
si que pour sa mort eschuer
si tost comme il fu revenus
il ne se fust jamais tenus
quil ne li heust descouverte
la mortel traison couverte
si que toute li devisa
et bien et bel len avisa

In the year thirteen hundred and sixty-nine,
In the season when a bitter wind blows
And lops the heads off many a flower
With the coldness of his sword,
And the earth is pretty and gracious
Because she wears a beautiful coat
That is whiter than any white flower,
And the frost is on the branch
Because of the coldness of winter
So that the birds and boars
And many other beasts take to ground,
Some to their lairs, others into the earth itself,
On the very day of January 16th,
Around the fifteenth hour
Of the night, he was at Nicosia
With his closest family
And some nobles of his land;
There the noble king of Cyprus
Was killed in his bedroom, inside the curtains,
Lying naked beside the queen.
And they dealt him more than forty
Wounds, truly more than fifty.
My lord Gautier de Conflans
Told me—not just me, I was the third
—That more than twenty were present.
And he was where it all happened,
And he said that he would fight on the field
Anyone who challenged him.
But I'll not debate this,
Nor fight on the field of honor,
For in France and the Empire
Such affairs quite often end badly, to tell the truth.
And here are all the details
Of how he was killed and laid on his bier.

His death had been plotted
And sworn by his enemies,
Who were in alliance
Even before he went to France.
He had left behind a knight
In his own country who knew well
That some desired to murder him.
And so to prevent him being killed,
As soon as he returned,
This man did not hold back at all
Until he had told the king
About this deadly, secret treason.
And he recounted everything to him
And advised the man well and properly.

li chevaliers dont je vous conte
fu monsigneur jehan le viconte
qui avoit este desconfis
en bataille jen sui tous fis
messires thommas de la marche
qui nest pas nez de danemarche
eins fu francois · le desconfit
en angleterre · et tant fist
par lespee qui tres bien taille
quil ot lonneur de la bataille
et de ses freres li dist tant
quil en estoient consentant
encor li dist il autre chose
que je nullement croire nose
car il li dist que la royne
estoit amie et concubine
a monsigneur jehan de mors
par le temps quil a este hors
et quil la heue · et tenue
cent fois en ses bras toute nue
et par dieu je croy quil mentoit
pour ce que la royne estoit
si vaillant et si preudefame
et en tous cas si bonne dame
que jamais ne si consentist
nau roy son signeur ne mentist
et vraiement elle amast mieus
quon li deust crever les yeus

Li roys pas tres bien ne cela
ceste chose · eins la revela
au prince qui estoit son frere
drois germains de pere et de mere
et quant li princes lentendi
tout en leure li respondi
que celui qui ce li enorte
et teles nouvelles li porte
avoit menti mauvaisement
et quil le disoit vraiement
pour engendrer division
et une grant discention
entre le bon roy et le pueple
quant si faites paroles pueple
et quil le face couvenir
et en sa presence venir
et se il le puet tel trouver ccclxiR
quil puist ceste chose prouver
quil les face tous sans atendre
morir · et escorchier et pendre

The knight I have been mentioning
Was my lord Jean Vicomte,
Who had been hurt
In a fight, of this I'm quite certain.
My lord Thomas de la Marche,
Who was not born in Denmark
But was French, had wounded him
In England, accomplished so much
With the sword—which cuts well
—That his was the honor in this fight.
And he told him much about his brothers,
Who had consented to it.
He told him something further
That I'd never dare to credit,
For he said to him that the queen
Had been the lover and concubine
Of my lord Jean du Morf
During the time he had been gone,
And that man had held and possessed her
All naked in his arms a hundred times.
And by God, I believe he did lie,
Because the queen was
Such a worthy and virtuous woman
And in every way such a proper lady
That she never would have consented to this,
Nor have played false her lord the king.
And she'd truly have preferred
Having her eyes torn out.

The king did not keep this matter
Secret in the least, but made it known
To the prince his brother,
Who had been born of the same father and mother.
And when the prince heard this,
He answered right away
That the man who had so informed him
And brought him such news,
Had viciously lied,
And that, truly, he had said this to him
In order to foster divisiveness
And a great dissension
Between the good king and the people
When he bruited about such statements;
And that he should have him summoned
And have him come into his presence;
And if he found him to be the sort
Who could prove such a thing
Then without delay he should have all of them
Put to death, flayed, and hung,

car bien laroient desservi
sil lavoient einsi servi
et se prouver ne le povoit
li princes disoit quil devoit
pareille peinne recevoir
se li roys fasoit son devoir
ceste chose fu revelee
a tous nobles de la contree
si vinrent tuit devers le roy
tous ensamble et en grant conroy
et se excuserent de ce fait
si com li princes avoit fait
li roys le viconte manda
et present tous li demanda
tesmongnage de verite
de la tres grant iniquite
et de la mortel traison
quon li pourchassoit sans raison
messires jehans la tesmongna
quonques homme ni ressongna
et li conta en sa presence
devant tous et en audiance
et dist quil sen voloit combatre
a .ii. ou a .iii. ou a .iiii.
en .iiii. jours lun apres lautre
teste armee et lance sur fautre
et seur ce la bailla son gage
au roy devant tout le barnage
quautre prueve ni trouveroit
nautrement ne le prouveroit

Quant il ot dit sa volente
et chascuns lot bien escoute
tuit deirent a une vois
gentils sires et nobles roys
ne le crees contre vos gens
car il se ment par mi les dens
cest uns angles deshonnourez
faus · mauvais · traitres · couez
il est parjurs et sest infames
diffames dommes et de fames
si ne le devez de riens croire
il perdi honneur et victoire
et dun chevalier desconfi
on en doit par tout dire fi
na li combatre ne se doit
nuls chevaliers tant ait bon droit
ne ja ne nous combaterons
a li · mais nous vous requerons

For this they would well have merited
Had they served him in such a fashion.
And if he could not prove this,
The prince maintained the man should
Be made to suffer the same penalty
Were the king to do what was just.
This affair was made known
To all the nobles in the country.
So they all came to the king,
In a body and with great pomp,
And they excused themselves of this thing,
Just as the prince had done.
The king sent for Vicomte
And, with everyone present, asked him
For proof of the truth
Of this very great iniquity
And of this mortal treason
Plotted without cause against him.
My lord Jean swore to this,
For he feared no man,
And in his presence, before them all
He described it, and loudly.
And he would fight, he said,
Two or three or four of them
Over four days, one after the other,
With his head armed and lance mounted.
And in this matter he gave his pledge
To the king, before all the nobles,
That no other proof could he furnish,
Nor otherwise could he prove it.

When he had said all he wished,
And every man had heard him out,
All of them said with one voice:
"Worthy lord and high-born king,
Don't believe him against your vassals.
For he lies in his teeth.
The man's a dishonorable Englishman,
False, traitorous, malicious, a "tailed" creature.
He has perjured himself and committed infamy,
Defamed men and women,
And so you should not believe anything he says.
He lost honor and victory
And was undone by a knight.
One should say 'fie' to all of this,
Nor should any knight, however justified,
Engage in combat with such a man.
Nor will we meet him on the field of battle.
Instead we enjoin you

quil soit jugiez selonc la loy
de chipre · car par saint eloy
puis que son fait prouver ne puet
drois commande et raisons le vuet
et la loy de chypre sacorde
quil soit pendus a une corde
comme traitres condampnes
ou mis aveques les dampnes
en prison ou en chartre obscure
sans jamais veoir creature
quant il orent dit leur plaisir
li roys ni quist autre loisir
einsois en leure leur bailla
et sa sentence leur tailla
et dist vesci que vous ferez
selonc vo loy le jugerez
puis que tesmognage ne trueve
par quoy son entention prueve
si le jugierent et preirent
et en un chastel le meirent
qui est appelles bonivant
et la fu mis par tel couvent
quonques puis dou chastel nissy
eins y fu mors en grant sousci

Mieus vausist quil se fust teus
car cils est fols et deceus
qui des signeurs trop sentremet
ou qui a leur conseil se met
pour dire chose qui desplaise
et cils qui dit chose qui plaise
est honnourez et bien venus ccclxiR
sages · bons · et loyaus tenus
et cils qui dit ce qui desplait
bastist pour lui si mauvais plait
ja soit ce que verite die
quen grant peril est de sa vie
par cestui le poez savoir
qui fu honnis pour dire voir
or en y a dune autre guise
car cils qui son signeur avise
et li dit ce que faire faut
ou quil li moustre son deffaut
en son conseil tout pleinnement
ou hors conseil priveement
maint sont qui en scevent bon gre
et qui mettent en haut degre
ceuls qui leur dient tels paroles
quant bourdes ne sont ne frivoles

To judge him in accordance with the laws
Of Cyprus; for by St. Eloi,
Since he can offer no proof for his charges,
This is what justice commands and reason requires.
And the law of Cyprus provides
That he should be hung by a rope,
Just like a condemned traitor,
Or put with the guilty
In some jail or dreary prison,
Never again to see another human being."
After they said all they wanted,
The king sought out no respite
But immediately charged them with the case
And framed this command for them,
And said: "Here is what you will do.
Judge him according to your law
Because I find no testimony
According to which I might prove his contention."
And they did judge and then seize him
And put him in a castle
That is called Buffivanto.
And there he was imprisoned on this condition:
That he never again leave the castle.
Instead, he died there in great misery.

Better would it have served him had he kept silent,
For a man is foolish and deceived
Who involves himself too much with great lords
Or seeks to be their advisor
By saying something offensive.
But whoever says what pleases
Is honored and quite welcomed,
Thought wise, virtuous, and faithful.
And the man who says what does not please
Embroils himself into such an unfortunate conflict,
No matter if he says the truth,
That he is in great peril of his life.
You can learn from this man,
Who was ruined by speaking the truth.
But there's another way for this.
For the man who counsels his lord
And tells him what action should be taken
Or who shows him his error,
Either publicly in his council,
Or in private audience outside of council.
Quite grateful for this are many lords
Who elevate to high rank
The men who speak such words to them,
When these are neither foolish nor frivolous.

mais le bon roy vueil excuser
sans flaterie et sans ruser
de ce que si tost pour jugier
leur delivra le chevalier
ja soit ce que leur loy deist
que li roys einsi le feist
car li roys ne fait jugement
daucun chevalier nullement
einsois les chevaliers le font
et les signeurs quant il y sont

Qui seroit ce qui oseroit
presumer ou qui penseroit
cuns tels sires fust tant hais
des nobles de tout son pais
et de ses freres proprement
com pour le tuer telement
et que la chose fust celee
si quelle ne fust revelee
car on dit souvent par la rue
chose qui est de .iii. sceue
cest fort chose a faire par mame
comment quil en soient en blame
car chascuns le tient et sans fable
plus quevangile veritable
et saucuns en sont exceptez
.ii. .iii. ou .iiii. en sont hostez
car gautiers me dist que sa mere
fu de la traison commere
quen chypre en a la renommee
dont elle est maudite et blasmee

Or vous ay dit et devise
comment le roy fu avise
de sa mort quon li pourchassoit
et comment souvent y pensoit
et autrefoys li devisa
li princes · et si lavisa
et li dist les mauvais couvines
et fu quant il fu aus salinnes
quil fist la darreniere armee
qui par li fu onques armee
quil assembla moult grant navie
pour aler a triple en surie
et avec ce li revela
li princes · et y appella
monsigneur jehan de gaverelles
qui fu a dire ces nouvelles
sans plus pour porter tesmongnage

Now I wish to excuse the king,
Without flattery or resorting to tricks,
In that he so quickly for a judgment
Delivered this knight to them,
For it is that their law states
How the king should do so.
For the king never passes judgments
On knights in any circumstance,
Rather the knights do so,
And the lords when they are present.

Whoever might be the one to dare
Presume or suppose
That such a lord might be so hated
By the nobles of his own land
And even his own brothers
That they should kill him this way,
Or that this business might remain secret
And never be discovered?
For in the street is often repeated
Something that is known by three;
But they are much to blame.
Such a thing's hard to do, by my soul,
For every man thinks it—and no lie
—Truer than the gospel itself;
If some were exceptions to this,
Two, three, perhaps four may be excused.
But Gautier told me that the king's mother
Played godmother to the treason,
For in Cyprus this is what is reputed to her,
And thus she is cursed and blamed.

Now I have described and recounted to you
How the king was warned
That his death was being sought
And how he often thought about this.
And on an earlier occasion the prince
Told him of this and offered him counsel
And described to him the malicious conspiracies,
And this was when he was at the salt lakes [in Larnaca in Cyprus, trans. note]
While he was assembling the last army
That would ever be assembled by him,
While he was gathering the very great fleet
To sail to Tripoli and Syria.
And in addition, the prince
Told him about and summoned to that place
My lord Jean de Gauerelles,
Who was there only for the purpose of relaying
These tidings, to bear witness

par tous pais que son hommage
foy · sairement fraternite
avoit vers le roy acquite
li roys la haute mer passa
et briefment il la rapassa
a romme ala vers le s. pere
pour florimont cest chose clere
si com devant devisie lay
or vous vueil dire sans delay
pour quoy et comment fu occis
li roys · des gens de son pais

Li roys en son pais revint
ou si fort malades devint
quil jut en son lit moult griefment
.vii. semainnes entierement
et en la fin il fu garis
dont maint eurent les cuers marris
car pour eaus mieus este eust cccIxiV
se dieus adonques pris leust
pour la traison qui celee
fust · quil avoient pourpensee
quant li roys fu en milleur point
et il vit le jour en bon point
talent li prist daler chacier
pour lui deduire et solacier
uns chevaliers o li estoit
a qui volentiers sesbatoit
ce fu henry de gibelet
il avoit .i. moult biau vallet
et savoit une belle fille
des milleurs de toute la ville
dame vesve · cointe et jolie
vicontes fu de nicossie
.ii. chiens avoit bons pour la chasse
et li roys qui volentiers chasse
dist a son fil quil les voist prendre
et les ameinne sans atendre
et ses fils tantost y ala
de ses gens prist qui furent la
.x. ou .xii. entre sa maisnie
qui li feirent compaingnie
que vous feroie je lonc conte
il vint en lostel le viconte
les chiens prist et les acoupla
et li fils de laiens sanfla
et en dist villeinnes paroles
qui estoient rudes et foles
dont il fist mal et villenie

Through the whole land that the prince had
Been loyal as a vassal to his oath,
His devotion, his brotherly feelings for the king.
The king traversed the ocean deep
And in a short he passed over it again.
He had gone to see the holy father in Rome
Because of Florimont; that's clear enough,
Just as I have recounted above.
My intention now is to describe
The reason why and the manner in which
The king was killed by the men of his land.

The king had returned to his country,
Where he became so terribly ill
That he lay suffering in his bed
For seven whole weeks.
In the end he regained his health,
And this made many sick at heart
Because it would have been better for them
Had God taken him at this time,
On account of the treason, which was
Kept secret, what they had planned.
When the king was in better condition
And in fine fettle saw the day come,
He had the urge to go hunting
In order to delight and entertain himself.
One of knights with him was a man
With whom he did willingly enjoy sport.
This was Henri de Giblet.
He had a quite handsome young son,
And a very beautiful daughter as well,
Among the fairest in the town,
A widowed lady, pretty and attractive.
He was viscount of Nicosia.
Two skilled hunting dogs were his,
And the king, who was an eager hunter,
Told his own son to go seize them
And lead them away at once;
And his son quickly went after them.
He took along some of his men there present,
Ten or twelve fellows from his household
Who would bear him company.
Why make this a long story for you?
He arrived at the viscount's dwelling,
Seized the dogs and leashed them.
And the son, who was within, grew angry
And spoke insulting words about it
That were rude and foolish,
And in this he acted badly and disrespectfully

qua fil de roy on ne doit mie
dire pour chose si petite
chose de quoy on le despite
vesci sa parole et son dit
si comme gautier le ma dit
il dist ainsi premierement
cest bien verite vraiement
que cis roys tous nous destruira
et en tous estas nous nuira
et vous nestes mie daffaire
que vous nous doiez ja mieus faire
pour quoy me tollez vous mes chiens
que jay norri · et qui sont miens
moult de choses dist en son ire
ainsi comme sil vosist dire
au conte de triple · par mame
pas nestes fils de preudefame
de parler po si refreingny
et a son pere sen plaingny
et quant ses peres lentendoit
il dist fils · chaloir ne ten doit
et certes il ne men chausist
se personne qui le vausist
en menast tes chiens et le mien
mais gens sont qui ne valent rien
gens de niant et garsonnaille
qui les en mainnent · et merdaille
li peres moult se courroussa
moult en parla moult en groussa
li contes de triples loy
qui onques ne sen resjoy
et li dist a moult tres grant son
henri · mapelles tu garson
et il respondi nennil sire
car quan que jay sans contredire
est a vous et a mon signeur
a qui dieux doint joie et honneur
mais je puis bien dire sans faille
quen ma presence ribaudaille
prennent le mien dont il me poise
car ce nest pas chose courtoise
la estoit lamiraut le roy
et si avoit si com je croy
aveques li ou .v. ou .vi.
des gentils hommes dou pais
sans les autres qui escoutoient
par derriere ce quil disoient
bien fu qui tout ce reporta
au roy · et qui li enorta

Because no man in a matter this trifling
Should say to the king's son
Something that would make him hated.
And here's what he said, his words,
Just as Gautier told them to me.
This is what he said first:
"Beyond any doubt, this is the truth:
That the king will ruin all of us
And do us every kind of harm.
And you're not the kind of man
Who should ever treat us any better.
Why do you take from me the dogs
I have raised and that belong to me?"
Many things he said in his anger,
Just as if he was intending to say to
The count of Tripoli: "By my soul,
You're no son of a virtuous woman!"
He held back little in what he spoke
And complained about this to his father.
And after listening to him,
The man said: "Son, pay this no attention.
I would certainly not be upset
Should someone who is worthy of it
Take away your dogs and my own.
But these are people of no breeding,
Good for nothings and rascals
Who lead them off, scum of the earth to boot."
The father grew very much enraged,
Said many things, bitterly complained.
The count of Tripoli heard him
And was not happy about it.
And he said to the man in a very loud voice:
"Henri, are you calling me a rascal?"
And the man answered: "Not at all, lord,
For whatever I have—and no argument
—Belongs to you and my liege,
To whom may God give joy and honor.
But this I can certainly say—no doubt:
In my very presence scalawags are seizing
What is mine, and this angers me
Because it is hardly a courteous thing."
The king's admiral was present
And had with him, so I believe,
Five or six of those
Who were noblemen of the land,
Not counting the others listening
In the back to what was being said.
There were several who reported
Everything to the king, encouraged him

quil preist crueuse vengence
de si tres grant desordenance
et fu le jour .xxviii^e^. cccIxiiR
de genvier · a heure de prime

Quant li roys oy la nouvelle
il dist ma doleur renouvelle
que je voy quon me tient si vil
quon dit villenie a mon fil
biaus dous dieux que tai je meffait
ne sera pugnis ce meffait
jay perdu honneur et loange
en ce monde se ne men vange
li roys fist .i. commandement
quon amenast isnellement
en sa presence le vallet
qui po savoit et po valet
de dire outrage et villenie
au conte de triple en surie
qui fils dou roy de chypre estoit
et telement le despitoit
et on li amena grant erre
li roys commanda quon lenserre
et quon li mette estroitement
uns fers en ses piez telement
et si pesans quil ne sen vole
car mettre le vuet en geole
et apenre .i. autre mestier
dont cure navoit ne mestier
li gentis rois faire faisoit
en .i. lieu qui moult li plaisoit
une maison toute nouvelle
qui devoit estre bonne et belle
car pas nestoit ouevre petite
on lappelloit la marguerite
il avoit la pluseurs esclaves
qui dedens fossez dedens caves
toute jour la terre fouoient
et hors a leur col la portoient
li roys ordena quon li meinne
et commanda seur moult grant peinne
quil ne soit homs qui lentreporte
qua son col la terre ne porte
et quil y foue toute jour
sans avoir respit ne sejour
com serf esclave la le mist
dont moult a envis sentremist
et certes il le refusast
volentiers se faire losast

To exact a cruel vengeance
For this outrageous act of disobedience.
And his was the twenty-eighth
Of January, at the hour of prime.

When the king heard this news,
He said: "My pain is renewed
When I see someone treat me so disrespectfully
That he speaks insulting words to my son!
Good sweet God, what wrong have I done You?
Will this misdeed not be punished?
I have lost honor and reputation
In this world if I take no vengeance."
The king gave an order
That to him should be quickly led
The young man who was so unschooled
And of such little worthiness
That he spoke outrageously and shamefully
To the count of Tripoli in Syria,
Who was the son of the king of Cyprus,
And treated him spitefully.
And he was brought there at great speed.
The king ordered the man bound
And his feet closely hung
With irons in such a way
And of such weight he could not escape,
For his intention was to put him in prison,
There to learn another way to live
About which he had no care or concern.
The noble king was having built,
In a place that greatly pleased him,
An entirely new dwelling
That was to be attractive and handsome,
For this was no small undertaking.
The Marguerite was its name.
At the site were a number of slaves
Who from ditches and holes
Every day shoveled out dirt
And then carried it away on their backs.
The king ordered him brought there
And commanded, on pain of great penalty,
That no man was to show him the favor
Of not bearing earth on his back
And that he should spend all day digging there
Without having any respite or relief.
He put him there like the meanest slave,
And he undertook very much against his will,
And surely he would have refused this
Gladly, had he dared do so.

mais la force nestoit pas sienne
ne que jherusalem est mienne

Encor y a .i. autre point
que je ne vous celeray point
car ci doy dire verite ·
quamour haine namite ·
ne me puissent ad ce mouvoir
que mensonge face dou voir
a nicossie ot une dame
qui estoit bonne et sans diffame
fille de monsigneur henri
suer au vallet dont je vous di
qui mariee estre soloit
li roys marier la voloit
et donner a .i. sien servant
pluseurs lempresserent · et quant
elle vit quon lapressoit trop
elle leur dist tout a .i. cop
quelle avoit grant devotion
de li mettre en religion
et que jamais mari naroit
plus chier asses morir aroit
li roys sen coursa durement
et jura moult grant sairement
quil navoit homme en son pais
tant fust grans oses · ne hardis
ne frere · nautre tant lamast
sil le coursoit quil ne coursast
li roys la fist tantost mander
pour li enjoindre et commander
que son servant a mari prengne
elle dist sire ja naveingne
que je jamais prengne mary
moult aroie le cuer mari
se ma devotion perdoie
que religieuse ne soie
et dist quelle lavoit promis ccclxiiV
present son pere et ses amis
qui estoient devant le roy
or vous diray trop grant desroy
li roys la fist sans detrier
devant chascun penre et lier
seur une eschiele et puis estendre
et la dame avoit la char tendre
si souffroit mervilleus martyre
des yeus pleure dou cuer souspire
et certes cestoit grant durte
et tres grant inhumanite

But the power was not his,
No more than Jerusalem is mine.

There is yet another matter
That I should not pass over in silence;
Instead I must speak the truth here,
For not love, neither hatred nor friendship
Would be able to persuade me
To twist the facts into some lie.
At Nicosia there was a lady
Who was virtuous, of no ill repute,
The daughter of my lord Henri,
Sister to the young man I've been discussing,
Who formerly had been married.
The king wanted her given
In marriage to one of his servants.
Several men had pressured her, and when
This pressure, in her eyes, became too great
She told them quite unexpectedly
That she was feeling a strong devotion
To join a religious order
And would never take another husband.
She'd much rather die than do so.
The king grew very angry about this
And swore a quite bitter oath:
There was no man in his kingdom,
No matter how great or daring or brave,
No brother or anyone else, however he loved him,
Who if he hated the king, the king would not hate in turn.
At once the king had the woman sent for
So that he might command and enjoin her
To accept his servant as her husband.
She said: "Sire, may it never happen
That I take any man to husband.
My heart would be very troubled
Should I abandon my devotion
And not become a religious."
Her answer was that she had promised this
Before her father and relations,
And they had been in the presence of the king.
What I must tell you now is quite distressing.
The king had her taken without delay
To be bound and tied on the rack
In front of everyone and then stretched.
And the lady had tender flesh
And so suffered incredible pain,
Wept from the eyes, sighed from the heart,
And no doubt this was horrible cruelty
And a terribly inhumane thing

de creature femenine
faire estendre et mettre a gehine
encor y ot chose plus lede
quon aporta de liaue tede
ou il avoit oile dolive
pour faire boire la chetive
si comme gautiers le ma dit
autrement ne di je en mon dit
mais li roys ne li demandoit
na nulle riens tant ne tendoit
fors quelle nommast la personne
qui li conseille destre nonne
et la dame li respondoit
en dementiers quon lestendoit
sire vous estes mes drois sires
faire me poez tous martyres
crucefier · morir ou vivre
et hors de ci mettre a delivre
mais ja ne diray de ma bouche
chose dont autres ait reproche
ne dont sans cause vaille pis
ce que je fais vient de mon pis
de mon cuer de ma conscience
de moy narez autre sentence
et si crioit a haute vois
adieu biau pere je men vois
car je voy bien que je sui morte
sans raison · mais ce me conforte
que garde nay de lanemy
car dieux ara pite de my
biaus signeurs dames · damoiselles
dames vesves · filles · pucelles
je vous requier pour dieu mercy
chastiez vous et mirez cy

La fu li princes et ses freres
li sires dabsur · et li peres
a la dame · et le tricoplier
qui scet plus que son pain mengier
et si estoit li amiraus
qui veoit faire tous ces maus
et puis le conte de rohais
et maint autre dont je me tais
car trop embesongnies seroie
se par nom nommer les voloie
li roys mout fort se repenti
quant onques il se consenti
a faire ce quil avoit fait
forment se repent de ce fait

To have a woman stretched
On the rack and put to torture.
There's something even uglier.
Hot water mixed with
Olive oil was fetched,
Which was for the captive to drink,
Or so Gautier has told me.
Otherwise, I'd not mention this in my work.
Now the king asked her but one thing
Nor was he pursuing anything as much
As that she should name the person
Who had counseled her to become a nun.
And the lady answered him
While she was being stretched:
"Sire, you are my rightful lord,
And so can make me suffer any pain,
Even crucify me, let me live or die
And set me free from this place here.
But I will never utter with my mouth
What will make another be blamed
Or without cause harm him.
What I've done comes from my breast,
From my heart and my conscience.
Save this, I have nothing to tell you."
And then she cried out in a loud voice:
"Farewell, sweet father, I'm passing on,
But I see clearly that I have died
For no reason; yet this comforts me,
That I don't fear the devil
Because God will take pity upon me."
Sweet lords, ladies, damsels,
Widow ladies, girls, and maidens,
For God's mercy, I beg you,
Discipline yourselves and think on this.

There were the princes and his brothers,
The lord of Absur, the lady's
Father, and the turcoplier,
Who could do more than eat his bread.
And the admiral was there too,
Who witnessed all these evils done,
And the count of Rohais as well,
Along with many others I'll pass over in silence
Because it would overburden me
If I intended naming each one by name.
The king was very repentant
That he had ever consented
To do what he had done.
He grieved mightily over the deed

car cest chose trop deshonneste
laide villeinne et scens de beste
ne tel chose a roy napartient
en nulle maniere · et si tient
que toutes vesves de son droit
et pucelles marier doit
qui demeurent en son roiaume
pour .v^{c}. mille muis de baume
ne les devroit einsi traitier
et si se doit moult bien gaitier
quil met sa vie en aventure
same · sonneur · et cest laidure
et pechie fait et mal aussi
tous princes qui le fait einsi
car tel franchise ont toutes fames
que de leur volente sont dames
ce dit li romans de la rose
tout clerement sans mettre glose

Atant de la se departirent
et le prince reconduisirent
et menerent en son hostel
la fu la traison mortel ccclxiiiR
tout de nouvel recommencie
traitie · juree · et plevie
et furent trestuit dun acort
que le landemain sans deport
li roys seroit ocis et mors
mais li roys voloit aler hors
si que plus matin se leva
deaus tous · dont sa vie sauva
landemain li roy appella
ses freres · et ainsi parla
a euls .ii. moult courtoisement
et moult tres amiablement
mi frere estes et mi amy
et je croy par lame de my
quen tous les cas que vous porries
moy et monneur garder vorries
et je lay bien aperceu
car jai esprouve et veu
que vous mavez sauve la vie
dont .c. mille fois vous mercie
on me raporte moult de choses
qui sont diverses et encloses
aus queles il faut que je pense
et jay en vous plus grant fiance
quen creature sans mentir
qui puissent vivre ne morir

Because it was a very immoral act,
Ugly, villainous, bestial in its intent.
Nor is such a thing fitting for a king
In any way at all. And he held
That he should cause to marry
By his right all maidens and widows
Who were living in his kingdom.
For five hundred thousand measures of balm
He ought not have treated them this way.
And he should have been very wary
That he was putting his life at risk,
His soul, his honor; and it's an ugly
Business, sinful in fact and evil too,
For all princes who do such a thing.
The reason is that all women do have
The freedom to choose whether to marry.
The Romance of the Rose says this
With complete clarity, with no gloss added.

Soon thereafter they left the place
And conducted and accompanied
The prince to his dwelling.
It was there that the deadly treason
Was begun once again,
Discussed, agreed upon, confirmed,
And they were all of one mind,
That on the morrow, without delay,
The king should be cut down and killed.
But the king was eager to go out
And so rose earlier than
All the others, and thus saved his life.
The next day the king summoned
His brothers and addressed
The two men alone quite courteously
And in a very amicable fashion:
"You are my brothers and friends,
And I believe, by my soul,
That whenever yours is the power
You intend to honor and protect me.
And this I've seen clearly,
For it's been my experience and I've seen
That you've preserved my life.
A hundred thousand thanks are yours for this.
Many things that are strange and disturbing
Are now reported to me,
And these I must consider.
And in you two I place greater trust,
It's no lie, than in anyone else
Who might live or die.

si vous seray sires et peres
amis compains · et loiaus freres
et je croy et di par ma foy
que tous tels serez vous a moy
en ce monde na gent si fausse
si traitre ne qui tant fausse
comme la gent de ce pais
si doubt que ne soie trais
car vraiement si fort me heent
qua moy destruire et honnir beent
et il ne puelent faire rien
que tous .ii. ne le sachies bien
et ja jhesu cris ne consente
quen fil de roy traison se ente
car mieus vaurroit mort par honnour
que vivre a tel deshonnour
en ce cas · especiaument
car trop ouvreroit folement
et trop griefment se mefferoit
li homs qui traison feroit
comment quen nul cas riens ne vaille
mais cest trop pire sans faille
et ce que lautre jour vous di
quil ni avoit nul si hardi
tant me fust pres ne tant lamasse
sil me coursoit que ne coursasse
je ne le dis mie pour vous
mais jestoie pleins de courrous
pour la grant desobeissance
que je veoie en ma presence

Et quant li frere lentendirent
tous .ii. a genous se meirent
et deirent moult humblement
sires et freres · ligement
vos hommes et vos freres sommes
et certes nous sommes preudommes
nonques ne fumes desloyaus
einsois sommes bons et loyaus
et avons este et serons
et envers tous vous garderons
com champions et advocas
vous et vostre honneur en tous cas
li roys les en mercia mont
et puis les fist drecier amont
et dist je sui asseures
poins queinsi vous le me jurez
et en la bouche les baisa
dont son ire mout rapaisa

And to you I'll be lord and father,
A friend, companion, and faithful brother,
And I believe and affirm on my faith
That you will be the same for me.
In this world no people are so false,
None so traitorous, none so intent on betrayal
As the people of this country.
So I fear I may be betrayed
Because in truth they hate me so much
They are devoted to my shame and destruction.
And these men can do nothing
That you two are not well informed about.
And may Jesus Christ never allow
Treason to take root in a king's son
Because he should prefer an honorable death
To living on with such disgrace,
Especially in these circumstances,
For the man with treason on his mind
Would be acting too much the fool
And should quite grievously go wrong
Although in no way would anything avail him.
But this thing is quite worse, no doubt.
And what I told you the other day,
That there's no man, however brave,
However close to me, however loved by me,
Whom I should not hate if he hated me.
I do not say this on your account.
But I was filled with rage
For the sake of the great disobedience
That I was witnessing in my presence."

And when the brothers heard this,
They fell down on their knees
And said with great humility:
"Lord and brother, we are
Your loyal liegemen and brothers.
And it is certain that we are proper knights,
Nor have we ever been disloyal,
But rather we are faithful and virtuous.
And this we have been and will be;
And from every man, as your champions
And advocates, we'll protect you,
Your person and your honor in every circumstance."
The king thanked them a great deal
And then had them rise,
And he said: "I am reassured somewhat
Since you swear to me in this way."
And he kissed them on the mouth,
Which greatly alleviated his wrath.

et aussi tous .ii. le baisierent
si quatant de la sen alerent
ce fu fait le jour .xiiii^{e}.
de fevrier · ou le jour .xv^{e}.
ce jour ala li roys jouer
pour veoir et pour ordener
la maison de la marguerite ·
qau deviser moult se delite ccclxiiiV
avec les esclaves trouva
le vallet ferre qui ouvra
et a son col portoit la terre
dont li cuers le destreint et serre
li roys nen fist onques samblant
einsois seur son mulet emblant
passa le chemin et la voie
sans faire nul samblant quil voie
son povre estat ne sa misere
puis sen ala veoir sa mere
et son mari qui deshaitiez
estoit forment · et mal traitiez
au soir revint en son palais
droit a heure de souper · mais
il avoit moult grant compaignie
de chevaliers et de maisnie
le prince et ses freres estoient
avec li qui le compaingnoient
congie preirent tous ensamble
et sen alerent ce me samble
en lostel dou prince · et briefment
la feirent .i. parlement
pour le roy honnir et destruire
en disant il couvient quil muire
et vesci ce quil ordenerent
et comment sa mort deviserent

Il fu la ordenet et dit
de chascuns deaus sans contredit
quau matinet se leveroient
et dedens le palais iroient
chacuns son espee en sa main
et se devoit estre si main
quencor fust la gent endormie
car se la cite estourmie
estoit · ce seroit uns peris
si grans · comme destre peris
et que quant en palais seroient
tres bonnes gardes metteroient
en tous les lieus de la maison
et li princes qui par raison

And these two kissed him as well,
And then left there directly afterward.
This happened on the fourteenth day of January
Or perhaps the fifteenth day.
This day the king went to disport himself
By looking at and taking charge of
The house of the Marguerite,
Which he took great joy in designing.
Among the slaves he found
The valet in irons who was at work
And was carrying dirt on his back,
Which pained and distressed him at heart.
The king did not look his way,
But seated on his ambling mule
Traversed the road and path,
With no indication that he noticed
The man's poor condition or misery.
Then he proceeded to visit his mother
And her husband, who was quite unhappy
And had been in a rather bad way.
That evening he returned to his palace
Right at dinner time, but indeed
There present were many
Knights and members of his household.
The prince and his brothers were
With him, did bear him company.
These men all took their leave in a group
And then left, I believe,
For the prince's dwelling, and in haste
They began a discussion
About shaming and killing the king
As they said: "He must die."
And here is what they decided
And what plans they made for his death.

It was there determined and affirmed
By every man among them with no dissent
That they would rise in the morning
And go inside the palace,
Each with a sword in hand.
And it would be at such an early hour
That the people inside would be still asleep,
For if the city were
Alarmed they should run
The risk of being killed.
And when they were inside the palace,
They would place very able guards
In all parts of the house.
And the prince, who by right

devoit estre li plus privez
dou roy · et tous li mieus amez
tout bellement et sans effroy
yroit hurter a luis dou roy
car on li ouvroit sans demeure
sil y hurtoit · et a toute heure
einsi leur mauvaitie faisoient
seulement pour ce quil voloient
quil ne leur peust eschaper
sil le peussent atraper
et einsi comme il lordenerent
le feirent et ascheverent
au matinet a grans eslais
sen alerent vers le palais
droit a leure que la corneille
les paresseus huche · et esveille
cest a dire a laube crevant
je pri a dieu quil les cravant
quant onques si grant mespresure
entra en cuer de creature
en la chambre a parer entrerent
quonques .i. seul mot ne sonnerent
chascuns son espee tenoit
et li princes qui les menoit
a luis de la chambre hurta
uns chambrelains bien lescouta
qui dedens la chambre gisoit
et li respondoit et disoit
hurtez bellement li roys dort
et li princes hurta plus fort
en disant compains ouevre luis
et cils respondoit je ne puis
si feras on sonne la cloche
je suis li princes dantioche
qui vueil .i. po au roy parler
pour ce quil me faut hors aler
finablement la chambre ouvry
et si tost com luis sentrouvry
.ii. degrez le prince avala
et au lit dou roy sen ala
si se resjoy moult forment
de ce quil le trouva dormant cccIxiiiiR
de la chambre est tantost issus
et dist signeurs or sus or sus
il est a point laiens alez
et faites ce que vous volez
dedens la chambre sont entre
et le vallet ont encontre
qui dist moult haut tous esbahis

Should be the most intimate
With the king and the most beloved to him,
Should knock on the king's door
In a pleasant fashion and without any fuss.
For it would be opened to them
Without delay and at any time should he knock.
This evil plan was devised by them
Only because they intended
He should not be able to escape them
If they could trap him there.
And just what was plotted by them
They carried out and succeeded at.
In the morning, they rode toward
The palace in great force,
Just at the hour when the crow
Calls out to and wakens sluggards,
That is, at the breaking of day
(I beg God to destroy them,
For never before did any man's heart
Conceive so great an iniquity).
Into his dressing room they came
And never uttered a single word.
Each man gripped his sword,
And the prince, who was in the lead,
Knocked at the chamber door.
A chamberlain who was abed
Within the room heard this well.
And he answered and said:
"Knock softly, the king's asleep."
And the prince banged even harder,
As he said: "Friend, open up the door."
And the man answered: "I cannot."
The other: "But do so, the bell is ringing.
I am the prince of Antioch
And wish to speak briefly to the king
Because I need to go away."
At last he opened up the room,
And as soon as the door was cracked
The prince hurtled down the two stairs
And made his way to the king's bed.
And so he was quite pleased
That he found him asleep.
Quickly he left the room
And said: "Lords, come on, come on!
He's right here; go and do
What it is that you intend."
Then they entered the room
Where they met the servant,
Who, terribly distressed, said loudly:

elas mes sires est trahis
a ce mot li roys sesvilla
qui onques puis ne sommilla
car doubtance avoit et freour
com cils qui de mort a paour
et si avoient ordene
que troy chevalier forsene
feroient tout ce malheur
li uns est li sires dabsur
qui le het plus quil ne solet
lautre fu cils de gybelet
li tiers fu cils de gauerelles
qui li porta dures nouvelles
car ce fu cils qui a grant tort
li donna le cop de la mort
et cil troy tuer le devoient
qui ses liges hommes estoient

Devant son lit sont arreste
de mal faire tuit apreste
li sires dabsur la courtine
qui de soie estoit riche et fine
tira · pour le roy mieux veoir
et pour son cop mieus asseoir
et si tost com li roys le vit
de son lit en gisant li dist
estes vous la sires dabsur
faus garson · traitre parjur
qui vous fait entrer en ma chambre
et il respondi sans attendre
je ne sui mauvais ne traites
mais tels estes vous com vous dites
dont vous morrez sans nul respit
des mes mains · et en ce despit
lors en son lit sus li coury
et .ii. cops ou .iii. le fery
en son bras dun coustiau dacier
nil ne le volt plus menacier
quant li roys se senti bleciez
tous nus est de son lit dreciez
et par la gorge le hapa
a .ii. point et si latrapa
que dessous lui le mist a terre
et si fort li estreint et serre
que par po quil ne lestrangla
lors gaverelles le singla
par mi les flans .ii. cops ou .iii.
de sespee · jusqua la crois
si que les bouiaus li cheoient
par mi les plaies qui sainnoient

"Alas, my lord has been betrayed!"
At this, the king woke up,
Who would never sleep again,
Because he was terrified and fearful,
Like a man afraid of death.
And they had planned
That three knights insane with anger
Would accomplish all this unfortunate act.
The first is the lord of Absur,
Who hated him more than was his wont.
The other was the lord of Giblet,
And the third was the lord of Gauerelles,
Who came bearing bitter news
Because he was the one who quite wrongly
Dealt him his deathblow.
And appointed to kill him were these three,
Who were his liegemen.

They halted in front of his bed,
All ready to do the evil deed.
The lord of Absur drew back
The curtain, which was of rich and pure
Silk, so as to see the king better
And deliver a more accurate blow.
As soon as the king spied him,
He said from the bed where he lay:
"Are you here, lord of Absur,
You disloyal knave, you traitor, you liar.
Who let you into my room?"
And he answered him without hesitating:
"I'm no traitor or evildoer,
But you are the very things you have said.
And for this you'll die with no mercy
At my hands." And in this fit of hatred
He rushed at him in the bed
And struck him two or three blows
On the arm with a steel knife.
Nor was he eager to make more threats
When the king felt himself wounded,
Stood up naked in his bed
And grabbed him by the throat
In two places and seized him in such a way
He threw him to the ground below him,
Held and grappled with him so fiercely
That he almost strangled the man.
Then Gauerelles struck the king
Two or three blows in the flanks
With the sword up to the crotch,
So that his bowels tumbled out
Through these wounds as they bled.

La fist hanris de gibelet
le pieur cop et le plus let
car trop durement le haioit
pour ses enfans que pris avoit
einsi com devant conte lay
si quil ni fist pas lonc delay
einsois la teste li fendi
si que la cervelle espandi
apres il li copa la gorge
dun coustel de mauvaise forge
que mal fust il onques forgiez
mieus fust sil en fust escorchiez
quant onques pour roy si vaillant
murtrir · ot manche ne taillant
seur lui furent si encharnez
quonques mais nuls homs de char nez
ne vit homme avoir tant de plaies
de la teste jusques aus braies
ne telles comme il li feirent
se dient ceus qui le veirent
quil en avoit plus de .lx.
bien doit estre la main dolante
qui est telle ne si hardie
quelle son droit signeur occie
et ni avoit que mortels plaies
he biaus dieux se tu ne les paies ccclxiiiiV
que dira on de ta justice
qui chascun justement justice
or vous diray ce quil disoient
quant einsi le roy mourdrissoient
or va va si fay tes armees
en france · et tes grans assamblees
va en prusse va en surie
pren nos filles si les marie
et meinne nos femmes treschier
avec les francois quas tres chier
apris tavons une autre dance
que ne sont les dances de france
mais ceus qui ces ouevres faisoient
tous ses hommes liges estoient

Or vous vueil deviser et dire
ce quil disoit en son martyre
moult devotement reclamoit
nostre dame que moult amoit
et li disoit de dieu ancelle
vierge · glorieuse pucelle
vierge pucelle vierge mere
mere dou fil · et fille au pere

There Henri de Giblet gave him
The worst stroke and the most heinous,
For he hated the him fiercely
Because he had seized his children,
Just as I've related above,
And so he did not delay long,
But caved in his head
So that his brains spilled out.
After this he slit his throat
With a knife of evil manufacture,
Sad the weapon was ever forged.
Better it would have been for the man
To be flayed alive than ever entertain the desire
Or intention to murder a king this valiant.
They set on him so eagerly
That never did any man born of flesh
See someone with this many wounds
From his head to his arms,
Nor ones like they dealt him.
Those who saw the king say
That he had more than sixty.
Rightly the hand should feel pain
That is so disposed or so foolhardy
As to strike down its proper lord.
And all the wounds were mortal.
Oh, sweet Lord, if You don't punish them,
What will be said of Your justice,
You who pass true judgment on every man?
Now I'll tell you what they said
While they were murdering the king:
"Go on, go on and raise your armies
In France and assemble the multitudes;
Go to Prussia, go to Syria;
Take our daughters, then make them marry;
And take our much beloved wives
Along with the French you hold so dear.
We've taught you another dance
Quite unlike the dances of France!"
And yet the men who did this
Were one and all his liegemen.

Now I intend to say and recount
What the king said in his suffering.
With great devotion he called on
Our Lady, whom he greatly loved
And said to her: "Handmaid of God,
Glorious virgin and maiden,
Virgin girl, virgin wife,
Mother of the Son and daughter to the Father,

mamour ma deesse ma dame
au jour dui recevez mon ame
et metez en vo compaingnie
et a ce mot perdi la vie

Or est raisons que je vous conte
apres ce mal et ceste honte
comment il fu en terre mis
par la main de ses annemis
tout premiers il lensevelirent
et le visage li couvrirent
pour ce que si mal atirez
estoit · et si deffigurez
quil ni apparoit forme domme
tant estoit plaiez cest la somme
couronne avoit de parchemin
painte · et tele que par chemin
nest nul homme sil la trouvast
tant fust povres qui la levast
et aussi le sestre et la pomme
estoient aussi povre comme
la couronne · et de tel pointure
mais je tieng a trop grant laidure
que les mauvaises gens et fausses
li avoient mis unes chausses
ronges · reses · viez et usees
et sestoient toutes troees
et uns viez solers emboez
qui tous .ii. estoient troez
si que lun des piez li paroit
telement qua tous apparoit
et .i. viez chaperon de pers
qui estoit tous mengiez de vers
ort et vil · et puant et sale
avoit · mors gisant en la sale

En ce point par mi nicossie
fu portes a sainte sophie
de ses freres et ses cousins
et puis de la aus jacobins
fu portez et en terre mis
avec son pere et ses amis
car la li roy de chypre gisent
sailleurs sepulture neslisent
ce fait la fausse gent ont pris
toutes les chartres dou pais
ou les coustumes et les loys
estoient · et les drois des roys
si les ont arses et brulees

My beloved, my goddess, my lady,
Receive my soul this day
And enroll it among your company."
And with this, he gave up the spirit.

Now it's fitting that I describe for you
How he was buried
By the hands of his enemies
After this evil and shameful deed.
At the outset they shrouded him
And covered up his face
Because he had been so ill used,
So disfigured by them
That he no longer seemed of human form,
So wounded had he been—that's the whole of it.
The crown he wore was painted
Parchment, and it was such that no man
However poor would have picked up,
Had he found it by the road side;
Also the scepter and orb
Were exactly as wretched
As the crown, painted just the same.
But I consider it quite dastardly
That these evil and traitorous men
Dressed him with breeches
That were ragged, torn, old, and worn;
And they were all full of holes;
And also old muddy shoes
That were both quite tattered,
So that one of his feet stuck out
In such a way that everyone could look at it.
And lying dead there in the hall,
He had on an old cloak of Persian cloth
That was worm-eaten through and through,
Filthy and vile, stinking and dirty.

In this state he was carried
Through Nicosia to St. Sophia's
By his brothers and his cousins;
And from there to the Jacobins
He was conveyed and put in the ground
With his father and his relatives.
For this is where the kings of Cyprus lie
If they choose no other place.
This done, the traitors then seized
All the country's charters
In which were the customs and laws,
And also the rights of kings.
So they burned and incinerated them

et en .i. ardant feu getees
si que mais ne seront veues
ne retrouvees ne leues
et pour plus grant desheritance
il feirent une ordenance
que esleus .xii. homes seroient
qui le pais gouverneroient
et si tost com lun mort seroit
le pueple .i. autre y en metteroit
pour ce que lois neust maistrie
jamais seur euls · ne signourie
ne puissance · eins fussent signeur
et en tous cas dou roy gringneur
si comme gautiers le ma dit ccclxvR
autrement ne di je en mon dit
einsi fu mors comme uns pourceaus
et com sot enterrez par ceaus
qui estoient si home lige ·
je croy que de londres en frige
passe a mil ans ne fu fais
ne penses si tres mauvais fait

Mors est li bons roys cest damages
ploures honneurs et vasselages
plourez enfans plourez pucelles
plourez dames et damoiselles
plourez aussi toutes gens darmes
plourez sa mort a chaudes larmes
plourez la foy de jhesu crit
car je ne truis pas en escript
que depuis le tans godefroy
de buillon qui fist maint effroy
aus sarrazins · fust home ne
par qui si mal fussent mene
ne qui tant leur feist contraire
quar de chypre jusques au quaire
les faisoit trambler et fremir
doit on bien plourer et gemir
la mort de si tres vaillant homme
il fu si vaillans cest la somme
que ce sera honneur et preuz
sil est mis avec les .ix. preus
si que ce sera li disiemes
car einsi comme nous disiemes
quant nous avons parle de li
onques riens ne li abeli
tant comme honneur chascuns le voit
et mars lavancoit et levoit
dont moult souvent saloit combatre

And tossed them into a blazing fire
So that they could not later be examined,
Or discovered, or read.
And to further even greater disinheritance,
They enacted an ordinance
That twelve men should be chosen
Who would then govern the land;
Whenever one would die, the people
Would then at once put another in that place
So that no law might hold sway,
Or rule, or wield power
Over them; rather there should be the lords,
Greater in every way than a king,
And this is just what Gautier has told me.
I say nothing else in my poem.
So he was struck down like a boar
And then like a beggar buried by those
Who were his liegemen.
I think that from London to Frisia,
For the last thousand years nothing
This evil has been plotted or carried out.

The good king is dead; it's shameful.
Weep, honor and lordship!
Weep, children; weep, maidens!
Weep ladies and young misses,
Weep also all you men at arms;
Weep for his death with hot tears!
Weep for the faith of Jesus Christ,
For I find no evidence in writing
About any man born since the time
Of Godfrey of Bouillon, who so harassed
The Saracens and put fear in them,
Has any other caused them such distress,
No man who opposed them this stoutly.
For he made them tremble and quake
From Cyprus to Cairo.
Shouldn't the death of such
A valiant man be mourned and regretted?
He was so valiant—here's the main point
—That it would be honorable and fitting
For him to be numbered among the nine worthies
So that he'd make the tenth.
For just as we've been saying
When we've spoken about him,
Nothing made him stand out as much
As did honor—so saw every man.
And Mars favored and exalted him
So that he often sought out war

quil en trouvient .c. contre .iiii.
et savoit victoire et honnour
si que signeurs se je lonnour
vous nen devez avoir merveille
mais dune chose me merveille
comment jhesu cris pot souffrir
tel homme a tele mort offrir
car onques mais certeinnement
de si tres bon commencement
je ne vi si piteuse fin
or prions a dieu de cuer fin
quil le preingne et mette en sa glorie
sara noble et digne victoire

amen ·

Pierre roy de jherusalem
et de chypre · le nomma len
et moy guillaume de machaut
qui ne puis trop froit ne trop chaut
si que nos .ii. nons trouverez
se diligemment les querez
en ces .ii. vers de grosse lettre
.mar. ostes et .h. y faut mettre
si les trouverez proprement
or les querez diligemment
et vezci des vers la maniere

adieu ma vraie dame chiere
pour le milleur temps garde chier

vostre honneur que jaim sans trichier

explicit la prise dalixandre

In which he found a hundred to his four.
And victory and honor were his,
And so, lords, if I honor him,
You should not think it strange.
But one thing I do wonder about:
How could Jesus Christ allow
Such a man to be delivered to this kind of death?
For never—and this is certain
—Have I seen such a wonderful beginning
Come to such a miserable end.
Now let us pray God with a pure heart
To receive and admit him to His glory;
This way he'll achieve a noble and worthy victory.

AMEN

Pierre, king of Jerusalem
And Cyprus, he is called,
And me, I am Guillaume de Machaut,
Who cannot stand too much cold or heat;
And you will find our two names,
Should you seek them diligently,
In these two verses in large letters.
Remove MAR and you must add H;
Then you will properly recognize them.
Now look for them closely,
See here the verses in question.

"Farewell, my true lady dear,
Keep your thoughts on better times;

Honor to you whom I love without deception."

Here ends *The Taking of Alexandria.*

Textual Notes

No attempt is made here to list all variants. Only those deemed significant are included. Special priority is given to the readings of **G**, which, after **A**, normally offers the most reliable text, though, as will become apparent, it often offers improving correction or outright rewriting. On some occasions, the testimony of **E** is invaluable. In contrast, the more divergent and original readings of **E** are also cited here for the purposes of illustration even though they do not carry much authority. Variants from **Vg** and **B** are only seldom cited except when they concur with either **G** or **A**. The text of this edition corrects several hundred errors of transcription found in Mas Latrie's previous edition, which is also based on **A**. These corrections are not noted here. For further information on variants, refer to the careful and accurate listing of them in the unpublished edition of Dzelzainis.

1. **A** *amours* with *ur* added superscript.
1–2. **G** has *amerent/jouerent*.
5. **G** *clere lune*.
30. **G** *grant meschie*.
34. **A** *belle* added in margin.
77. **A** *signeur* with *ur* added superscript.
85. **A** *natarga* with *r* added superscript.
91. **E** *la princesse*.
125–6. **E** *selonc ce quelle li fera/ ou que il se gouverna*.
328. **G** *comment se*.
362. **G** *separe*.
378. **G** *saint passage*.
449. **G** *combla*.
461–2. These lines are missing in **G**.
530. **A** *si parti* gives hypometric line; add *et* as in **G**.
535. **G** reads *mais vesta qui*.
548. **A** reads *prenet* (missing nasal stroke); correct to *prenent*.
577. **A** repeats this line almost exactly after 577: *ceus quelle a mis en haut degre*.
712. **G** *labsorre et*.

760. **E** *si comme je le tiens et croy.*

838. **G** *quil ne baille.*

866. **G** *sa* for *si.*

960. **A** *signeur* with *ur* written superscript.

986. **A** *demeure* corrected to *demeurent.*

1029–30. **E** *et si het fort ses annemis/ et de sen vengier ententis.*

1049. **G** *querez signeur.*

1065–6. **E** *et pour ce quil voloit traitier/ et son fait li dire et conter.*

1115. **G** *tant honnourez tant conjois.*

1122. **G** *grant riche taillie a sisel.*

1146. **A** reads *diron*, which does not give good sense. Read *diray* with **G.**

1147. **E** reads *intovons* for *micanons.*

1164. **A** reads *instrumes* (missing nasal stroke); emend to *instrumens.*

1199. **A** reads *retreire*; emend to *retreirent.*

1219. **A** omits *et*, making line hypometric; add *et* with other MSS.

1348. **A** reads *as roys* which does not give good sense. Read *cils roys* with **G.**

1474. Missing in **AVgB.** Added from **G. E** has *plus gracieuse ne plus belles.*

1525. **G**'s geography is more correct here, according to Iorga 1896. **A** reads *le caire et le joure*, where the first name makes no good sense. **E** offers a similar problem with *le carme et le jour.* Modern river names are from Iorga; some sources disagree.

1544. **A** adds *.vi.* as correction

1581. **G** reads *instruel pris*, which does not give good sense.

1707. **A** reads *quant*, which does not give good sense; correct to *quan* with other MSS.

1727. This line has been effaced in **G.**

1804. **A** reads *pannos* (missing nasal stroke); emend to *pannons.*

1830. **A** reads *chergie*; correct to *chargie.*

1839. **A** reads *ein*; emend to *eins.*

1877. **E** has *et quaraques longues et lees.*

1885. All but the initial *et* effaced in **G.**

2017. **A** reads *chevaus*, which gives inferior sense and makes the line hypometric; emend to *chevriaus* with other MSS.

2077–8. These lines missing in **G.**

2090. Only **A** reads .xviii.; other MSS agree on .xxviii., which is the correct date.

2101. This line effaced in **G.**

2135. A reads *prenos* (missing nasal stroke); emend to *prenons* with other MSS.

2153. This line effaced in **G**.

2244. G reads *quoie et plate*.

2268. G reads *tout quan quil*.

2275. A reads *si qui que si*, which gives poor sense and grammar; emend to *si que si* with other MSS.

2309. This line effaced in **G**.

2414. **VgBE** *sanz doubtance*.

2517. This line effaced in **G**.

2560. A reads *peut*, which should be emended, with **G**, to *peust* for the sake of the rhyme.

2586. A reads *et garros*, which gives a hypometric line; read *et de garros* with **G**.

2600. A reads *laries* (missing nasal stroke); emend to *lariens* with **G**.

2621. This line effaced in **G**.

2673. A reads *taillans*, which does not give good sense; emend to *caillos* as in **G**.

2725–6. These lines effaced in **G**.

2779. G reads *clerement*, which perhaps gives better sense than **A**'s *outreement*.

2855. G *a lassaut*.

2874. G *venist*.

2913. A reads the monosyllabic *viell*, which gives a hypometric line; emend to the disyllabic *vielle* with **G**.

2914. A reads *serre*, which does not give good sense; emend to *secre* with **G**.

2954. A reads *fuioient* rather than *sievoient*. **A**'s reading should be rejected as a diplography.

2978. G reads *salemon* for *pharaon*.

2998. G reads *cheminer* for *chevauchier*.

3024. A reads *tui*, which should be emended with **G** to *tuit*.

3042. G reads *chevauchons*.

3046. E reads *et avons espoir quil nous aide*.

3101. A reads *quant*, which gives awkward grammar; read *que* with **G**.

3169. G reads *nous* for *eaus*.

3241. A reads *ca*, which should be emended with **G** to *car*.

3280. E *fort seroit de eulz contraitier*.

3282. A reads *chevals*, which gives poor sense; read *chevaliers* with **G**.

3305. G reads *ouvrer* for *user*.

3351. **A** reads *series* (missing nasal stroke); emend to *seriens* with other MSS.

3361. **G** *regardons*.

3491. **G** *quar* for *que*.

3506. The choice of readings here is difficult, depending on what one construes as the antecedent of the pronominal direct object. Is it the feminine *terre* (3491)? Or the masculine *pais* (3493)? **A** reads *le*, but I have emended with **G** to *la* because I believe that *terre* is the more likely antecedent.

3520. **G** *disons* for *disans*.

3548. **A** reads *devoiet* (missing nasal stroke); emend to *devoient* with **G**.

3580. **A** reads *ne le*, but this gives inferior grammatical sense; read *ne vous* with **G**.

3603. **A** reads *qua*, which does not give good grammatical sense; read *quar* with **G**.

3672. **A** omits *dormons*, present in other MSS; a space has been left for it in **A**.

3677–8. These lines reversed in **AVgBE** and could stand without emendation. This reversal, however, is awkward; the order here is that of **G**.

3723. **G** *souffla* for *senfla*.

3736. **G**'s reading *li faut jhesu* gives the best sense, but the other MSS all agree on the *lectio difficilior*, which is retained here.

3762. **G** reads *et ament* for *il a mont*.

3764. **A** reads *porriens* here, which gives inferior sense (for it is Bremont's voyage, not the voyage of Bremont and Pierre which is at question here); read *porries* with **G**.

3820. **G** reads *bons* for *tous*.

3877. This line effaced in **G**.

3929. This line effaced in **G**.

3963. **G** reads *menez* for *prenez*.

3978. **E** *aussi comme seust fait la foudre*.

3986. The sentence that begins in 3981 does not end grammatically in 3986, but 3987 begins a new sentence. In addition, there is a distinct change in topics between 3986 and 3987. Yet this lacuna, if that is what it is, exists in all manuscripts, suggesting that this may have been the original reading. On balance, however, it is reasonable to suppose that there is a lacuna here of incalculable extent. Mas Latrie does not recognize a gap here in his edition, but Dzelzainis does. It is at least two lines (a single couplet), so those missing lines have been represented here by

dashes in a series. There is no reason to renumber, as does Dzelzainis.

4000. **E** *et sains et saulz nous ramanra.*

4003. **A** reads *paidier*; emend to *plaidier.*

4013. **G** reads *plein saut* for *prinsaut.*

4057. **A** reads *lentendire*; correct to *lentendirent.*

4087. This line effaced in **G.**

4139. This line effaced in **G.**

4150. **A** reads *ci*, which does not give good sense; correct with **G** to *ce.*

4182. **AVgBE** agree here on *chevalerie* rather than **G**'s *chancellerie*, but **G**'s reading makes much better sense and has been substituted (the readings of the other MSS can be explained by textual corruption, since the two words are similar in form, in a common exemplar). Certainly, *chancellerie* is the *lectio difficilior* and deserves priority for that reason as well.

4191. This line effaced in **G.**

4215. The context here could support either a singular or plural form of *galee*. **AVgBE** agree on the singular form *leur galee* while **G** has the plural *leurs galees*. Since **A**'s reading is possible and supported by other MSS, it has been retained, though the choice here is difficult.

4216. **A** reads *ave*; correct to *avec.*

4243. This line effaced in **G.**

4244. **G**'s reading *long leur demande* perhaps gives better sense than *long de sa demande* in **AVgBE.** However, this reading looks suspiciously like a diplography, so **A**'s reading has been retained.

4295. This line effaced in **G.**

4300. Read *fist le* with **G** in order to avoid a hypometric line.

4316. **A** reads *en tel anuis en tel peril*, which ruins the rhyme; read with **G** here.

4325. **A** reads *plugie* (missing nasal stroke); correct to *plungie.*

4328. **G** reads *navie* here, which perhaps makes better sense than *maisnie* in **AVgE.** The choice of readings is made difficult here by the fact that **B** initially read *maisnie*, later corrected to *navie.*

4346. **G** reads *scens temps* here as opposed to **AVgBE**'s *son tans.*

4424. **G** reads *la* as opposed to *leur* in **AVgE. B** originally read *leur*, corrected to *la.*

4470. **G** reads *sous* as opposed to *sans* in **AVgBE.**

4508. **G** *pelees*, **BE** *paulees*, **Vg** *parlees.*

4548. **E** *ses gens pour envoier de la.*

4564. **A** reads *aimme*; correct to *aimment.*

4571. G reads *autre* rather than *avant*.

4585. G *gueres* rather than *mie*.

4617–8. E *questre homme dou roy dengleterre/ne voult estre en nulle guerre*.

4635. G reads *et non enfant* against *et enfant* in AVgBE. G's information is incorrect.

4653. A reads *gresille* here, which is a diplography; the correct name is *groiselle*, as in G.

4675. G *tous* rather than *sont*.

4716. A's *capta* should be corrected to *captal* with G.

4733. A's reading *la queville* is incorrect; G offers the correct *baqueville*.

4737–8. These lines lack in all MSS except BE. The information they contain is correct, however, and there is no reason to suspect that a scribe would supply details this arcane, while the treatment is entirely in accord with the catalog Machaut here furnishes.

4843. It would be possible to retain A's reading here, *se deffendi*, but the sense it gives is barely possible. It is better here to read *le deffendi* with G.

4852. A's *retreire* must be corrected to *retreirent* with G.

4908. E *darmes et sy set ententis*.

4916. G reads *entour moy* as opposed to AVgBE's *encor noy*.

4930. A reads *que* here (missing nasal stroke); emend to *quen*.

4955. A reads *seur* here, which gives poor sense and is likely a diplography; emend to *sus* with G.

4967. A has *tuit*, a clear diplography, instead of *turc* as in G, which gives better sense.

4997. A's *le douin* is a clear error for *jodouin*, the correct form of this name as elsewhere.

5012. A adds *rendue* as a correction.

5102. A's comme *lyons* should be corrected to G's *comme uns lyons* to avoid a hypometric line.

5116. G *sans savoir nul respassement*.

5198. G *les clers* for *les cles*.

5228. The choice of reading here is difficult. G's *approuvee* yields better sense than *esprouvee* from AVgBE, but this latter is certainly the *lectio difficilior* and G here may simply be correcting, as often elsewhere.

5259. G *essaier que turc*.

5287. A reads *doit* (missing nasal stroke); emend to *doint*.

5305. VgBE *descendirent*.

5360. E *et prirent le chemin tout plain*.

5424. G reads *canons* for *garros*.

5554. G *linage* for *barnage*.

5598. G *navies* for **AVgBE**'s *navrez*.

5667. G *nemporterent* for *naporterent*.

5739. G *loies* for *lyez* in **AVgBE**.

5847. This line effaced in **G**.

5867. **A**'s *de* should be changed to *le*, as in other occurrences of this knight's name.

5938. **A**'s *monseingne* is a clear error for *menseingne*, as in **G**.

5960. G *estache* for *escharpe*.

5981. G *einsois que*.

6041. G *vengier* for *bougier*.

6106. **GVgBE** read *penront*, but this gives inferior sense, so there is no reason not to retain **A**'s *penrons*.

6117. G *einsi* for *ainsois*.

6219. **A**'s *nul jour* does not give as good sense as **G**'s *mil jour*, which has been printed here.

6284. **A**'s *homme et le femme* gives a hypermetric line; emend with **G** to *homme la femme*.

6302. G lacks *fist*.

6327. G *devers* for *dales*.

6343. **A**'s *leur gent* is likely an eyeskip diplography; read *la gent* with **G**.

6388. **A** reads *ges* (missing nasal stroke); read *gens* with **G**.

6400. **A** reads *lan*; emend with **G** to *len*.

6449. G *fariole*.

6476. G *porroit*.

6522. G *lescauperche*.

6595. G *et tous crestiens esmouvoir*.

6610. **A**'s *que* does not give good sense; read *se* with **G**.

6668. G *dou soudan et*.

6687. G *que cils estoit mors*.

6693. **G**'s *se face* gives better sense than **A**'s *le face* and has been printed here.

6698. **A** reads *pa*, which has been corrected to *par*.

6714. **E** *rage meschiet qui les soufrist*.

6767. G *par mer nagent*.

6801. **A** has a space left for the rhyme word; *gascongne* supplied from **G**.

6805. **A** reads *dambio*, which does not give good sense; read *danjo* with **G**.

6826. G *hache* for *sache*.

6844. A reads *et coloures*, which gives poor sense; read *est coloures* with G.

6858. A reads *juene chenu*, which makes the line hypometric; read *juene et chenu* with G.

6888. G *qua* for *quar*.

6931. No rhyme word in A, but space left; read *entes* with G.

6954. G *esclaves* for *essilliez*.

7016. A reads *san*; emend to *sans* with G.

7017. G reads *pour eus* rather than *pour lui* in AVgBE. Both readings give good sense, but G's is perhaps better, likely another example of the noticeable tendency toward improving correction in this MS.

7018. G *pooit* for *peust*.

7041. G reads *sievi tant*, which also gives good sense.

7054. A's *traire* gives awkward sense here; read *terre* with G.

7110. G *se treirent*.

7185. A reads *est sest*, which seems an error for *et sest* as in G.

7190. A reads *quon nature*, which does not give good sense; read *com nature* with G.

7241. E *nest pas mon profit*.

7298. G reads *tous debas*, which gives better sense than A's *tous delis* and has been printed here.

7329. A's reading *les clers* seems clearly in error; read *les clez* with G.

7340. E *gracieuse ly fut et belle*.

7351–2. These two lines inverted in G.

7426. G *remerir* for *requerir*.

7411–2. These lines are not present in A and are not essential for the meaning of the sentence, but are present in all other MSS. They are printed here, but the possibility of authorial editing cannot be ruled out.

7432. A reads *et commun*, a clear error; read *est commun* with G.

7496. A reads *sestoit*, which gives a hypometric line; read *et sestoit* with G.

7528. A omits the rubric identifying Pierre's letter; it is here supplied from G.

7679. A reads *commandemes* (missing nasal stroke); read *commandemens* with G.

7754. G reads *desamessurez*.

7803. A reads *san*; emend to *sans*.

7812. G *ont il gaingnie paradis*.

7815. G and A offer a difficult choice of readings here. A's *le puist* is certainly possible, with the implicit reference being to Pierre alone (since he is the one who requires reconciliation). But G's *les puist* (referring to both Pierre and the Sire de Lesparre) is equally plausible, perhaps preferable and has so been printed here.

7830. A's reading *par* produces a hypometric line; emend with G to *et par*.

7849. A's reading *losparre* is a clear error and should be emended to *lesparre*.

7892. G *clerement* for *proprement*.

7928. G reads *purgation* for *punition*, another example of an improving correction.

8014. A reads *la roy*; correct with G to *la royne*.

8018. A reads *cousstans* here, but the generally accepted version of the name of Machaut's informant is Gautier de Conflans, as in G.

8099. G *devers* for *devant*.

8128. G *traitres prouves*.

8176. G *homme* for *honnis*.

8185. G *dieus* for *dient*.

8215. A's *en querant* gives inferior sense and produces a hypermetric line; emend with G to *en a*.

8244. A reads *gros* here; emend with G to *gens*.

8262. G *un fil avoit moult biau vallet*.

8296. A reads *aussi*, which gives poor sense; emend to *ainsi* (G reads *einsi*).

8325. A reads *o .v.*, which seems a clear error for *ou .v.*; emend accordingly with G.

8515. A reads *de .c.*, which gives poor sense; emend with G to *dont .c.*

8704. A reads *pus*; correct to *plus*.

8821. The choice of reading here is difficult. G's *roys* gives somewhat better sense, but may be an improving correction.

Explanatory Notes

These notes serve different purposes. In part, they provide historical and contextual details for the events recounted in the poem that might otherwise prove puzzling to the general modern reader. No attempt has been made, of course, to duplicate the now voluminous published materials devoted to Pierre, French culture in Cyprus, and the fourteenth-century crusade; the principal relevant works are amply referenced here and in both the introduction and the selected bibliography. However, I have tried to provide enough in the way of necessary facts so that an informed reading of the poem is possible without any consultation of the secondary literature.

At the same time, these notes are also for the convenience of fellow scholars. I have here quoted appropriate passages, sometimes rather lengthy, from more or less contemporary sources, with the general aims of adding detail and depth to Machaut's account or demonstrating the poet's detailed and often authoritative knowledge of events that took place far from his home in northern France. I apologize to the curious nonspecialist for not translating these passages into modern English when a published translation is unavailable, but considerations of space have not so permitted. References to Makhairas are from Dawkins 1932 (the English translation of his Greek); to Bustron, from Mas Latrie 1886; to Strambaldi and Amadi, from Mas Latrie 1891 (these three works are in Italian); and to Mézières, from Smet 1954 (Latin).

Line 19 *Tragediane* is a rare Latinism in French texts of the period (occurring twice, for example, in the balades of Eustache Deschamps) as a masculine noun with the more or less modern meaning of "tragic actor." The word here is feminine and can hardly have the same sense. I have understood it, with Dzelzainis 1985, as "pagan high priestess."

Lines 44–68 By the time Machaut came to write the *Prise*, the *topos* of the Nine Worthies had become a common motif in narrative literature and the plastic arts. It had been invented by Jacques de Longuyon in his narrative poem *Les Voeux du Paon*, which was completed about 1312–13. It seems likely, though by no means proven, that Machaut was the first writer to add a tenth to the list, thus neatly adapting the *topos* to the subject of the poem. Making the list the central motif of Mars's speech is a stroke of dramatic genius. One of those who added a tenth to the list of nine was Eustache Deschamps, who in one of his balades adds the contemporary

Bertrand du Guesclin. Deschamps is apparently himself imitated by Cuvelier in his *Chronique du Bertrand du Guesclin*; it is also possible that Cuvelier knew the *Prise* and is simply following Machaut's lead. For full details and discussion, see Schroeder 1971, esp. 203–224.

Line 135 Pierre was born on October 9, 1329, on the feast day of St. Denis. It was thus on his birthday that the triumph at Alexandria was achieved in 1365.

Line 156 Because Pierre is imagined here as the son of Venus, this makes him the cousin of Minerva (if we accept, with some mythological accounts, that Venus, like Minvera, was fathered by Zeus).

Lines 236–50 Suppressing the letters MAR yields the following solution (even if H is not added as per the poet's instruction):

> Pierre de Lusigna, roi de Chypre
> Guillaume de Machaut
> See Hœpffner 1906 for further details.

Lines 291ff Actually this visionary experience occurred, apparently in 1347, at the Benedictine abbey near Stavrovouni, which is located in a mountainous area (Monte Sainte-Crois) near the town of Larnaca that had been for a long time famous as a shrine when Pierre visited there. The sanctuary was said to contain a piece of the True Cross embedded in pieces of the two crosses from the thieves crucified with Jesus, believed to have been carried to the island by St. Helena. This story of Pierre's youth is not given prominence in Makhairas even though that Cypriot chronicler does include some important information about this period of his life.

Lines 349ff The reference here is to the Order of the Sword, which Pierre likely founded in 1347 (though the date is disputed by the historians) at the time when the eighteen year old had been made count of Tripoli. Iorga suggests that it was the arrival in Cyprus of Philippe de Mézières the year before that gave Pierre the idea of founding a chivalric order, as he had done himself (The Order of the Passion, perhaps the most famous of the late medieval military orders). Iorga (1896, 85) says: "Philippe de Mézières was perhaps one of the first Knights of the Sword. Since his initial arrival in Cyprus, a friendly relationship must have developed between the young prince and the knight from Picardy, who had come from that West which seemed so splendid in the mind of the count of Tripoli and to which he was to flee a few years later. . . . The mystical and warlike personality of Philippe was moreover just what would have pleased him: in his father's court, so peaceful and monotonous, he had finally found someone to whom he could confide unabashedly and with pleasure his dreams of holy war and far off conquest." Mas Latrie (1877, 277n.) argues that Pierre would have been unable to realize such a project at this time because of his tender age and his father's opposition to crusading. He dates the order's foundation rather to Pierre's first year on the throne, but this view does not take into account what must have been the considerable influence of Mézières on the young man. In any event, the order's original purpose was the reconquest of the kingdom of Jerusalem, but, later, when this proved impossible, it became the defense of Cyprus.

Evidence suggests that the order survived Pierre's death by some decades. For further discussion of Pierre's order and the others of the later Middle Ages see Boulton 1987.

Lines 386ff Hugues IV, who became king in 1324, did not allow Cyprus to become involved in overseas adventurism, having a healthy fear of the Turks. He was also afraid that if his men traveled to the west they might be attracted by its glamour and abandon the defense of the realm. Unlike his father, Henri II (who had the unhappy fate of living through the fall of Acre on May 18, 1291), Hugues turned his attention toward maximizing the kingdom's role as a mercantile middleman. Under his leadership, Cyprus became quite wealthy as an exporter to the west of trade goods and commodities such as barley and cane sugar. A man of intellectual taste and refinement, Hugues commissioned Boccaccio to write the *Genealogy of the Pagan Gods*.

Line 516 It was 1349, three years after the disastrous French defeat at Crécy by the English. Actually, Pierre, at this time prince of Tripoli, determined to travel west along with his young brother Jean, titular prince of Antioch. They were aided in this enterprise by an accommodating knight, one Jean de Lombard. Furious at the deception, Hugues ordered the unfortunate Jean de Lombard (apprehended before disembarking himself) tortured to reveal the plans of his two sons and then put to death. The galleys Hugues sent in pursuit intercepted the two men as they neared Sicily. Brought home, they were imprisoned at Kyrenia. Their release (which likely came sooner than Machaut here suggests) was effected by papal intercession as well as paternal pity, or so some sources suggest. As is often the case, Machaut's account of these events agrees substantially with what Cypriot chroniclers record. Makhairas offers a full discussion that emphasizes the anger and grief of the king: "When the king heard that his two sons had gone, he fell into deep grief, and I cannot tell you the bitterness which he endured. . . . The king took all his barons and went out seeking for his sons, and he was like to die of vexation. . . . That this affair of his sons should not rest without their being punished, and that the king might make an example to prevent men from going to place to place they arrived at last at Kerynia; here he put his two sons into prison. And the king stayed at the gate [of the prison], and was in great grief. And they remained there three days, and the king was much grieved, so that it was the cause of his death" (75, 77).

Lines 612–618 Cf. the account of Pierre's coronation in Mézières:

"Tempore autem constituto et determinato ipsius regis coronationis, et multis praedicantionibus et divinis admonitionibus ipsius legati praecedentibus, rex, regina, legatus [i.e. Peter Thomas], omnis exercitus, and populus utriusque sexus in Famagusta cum magna solemnitate venerunt, et peractis aliquibus solemnitatibus ad talem actum pertinentibus, ad requisitionem omnium baronum nobilum regni necnon et totius populi una voce clamantium legatus pontificalibus indutus, cum omni clero solemniter associatus, suffragiis et ceremoniis ad hoc pertinentibus laudabiliter et devote peractis, cum omni gaudio et laude Dei in ecclesia cathedrali Famugustana coram omnibus ad honorem Dei et ecclesiae suae sanctae et multiplicationem fidei et destructionem inimicorum crucis Petrum de

Lezignyaco iam coronatum corona Cypri oleo sancto inunxit et sacravit, et coronam Ierusalem hereditarie sibi legitime pertinentem super caput eius posuit, et ipsum solemniter coronavit, et factum est gaudium universale ab omnibus Christianis orientalibus et maxime accipientibus" (91–92).

Machaut's account of these events is somewhat misleading, if not inaccurate. Father and son were reconciled before the former's death in 1359, and Pierre had actually been crowned king of Cyprus the previous year in the hopes of avoiding a conflict over succession. Makhairas says: "I have found it recorded that King Hugh crowned his son (Peter) as king of Cyprus in his own lifetime on the twenty-fourth of November 1358 after Christ. . . . And [in his lifetime] he made his son [John] the prince Constable of Cyprus and his younger son [James], Constable of Jerusalem and Seneschal" (77, 79). Pierre's older brother Gui, prince of Galilee, had died in 1343, survived by his son Hugues, who claimed to be the king's true successor, maintaining that the right had passed from his father to him. Pierre's lawyers countered with the claim that this right could not have been passed to Gui to his son because Gui did not live long enough to be in seisin of it. In other words, the issue is whether a so-called "right of representation" existed in Cypriot law.

Pierre was summoned by the pope to defend his claim, but also, some sources suggest, by the king of France, to whom Hugues had made an appeal. As the *Chronique d'Amadi* records: "Il re de Franza, che non si tenne a patto del acordio che il principe de Galilea fece con li ambasssatori del re Piero, rechiese al santo Patre, et lui scrisse al re Piero de andar personalmente in la corte de Roma par deffendersi" (412).

Though the pope and Jean II sided initially with Hugues, Pierre was able to argue his case successfully, in part because his brief was based upon the Assizes of Jerusalem, the law code of the Latin East (see Edbury 1977 for a full discussion of the Assizes and Cypriot culture). Hugues was granted a pension and the title of prince of Galilee. He accompanied Pierre on the expedition to Alexandria, where he distinguished himself, as Machaut notes. After his father's death, Pierre did assume the additional title of king of Jerusalem; certainly this is the coronation to which the poet and Mézières allude. At his coronation, Pierre filled a number of offices, according to Cypriot custom, for life, as Makhairas records: "When King Peter was crowned . . . [he] made ordinances and granted the offices of the kingdom that were void. That is, the princedom of Antioch he gave to his brother Sir John de Lusignan; he also gave him the post of Constable of Cyprus. And to his other brother James he gave the post of Constable of Jerusalem. And sir Philip d'Ibelin the Lord of Arsuf he made Seneschal of the Kingdom, and sir Raymond Babin Butler of the Kingdom of Cyprus, and Hugh Ognibono, the physician, Chancellor of the said kingdom of Cyprus, and sir Peter Malocello Chamberlain of Cyprus" (89). Makhairas leaves out Phillipe de Mézièrres, who also served Pierre as chancellor.

Lines 628ff Machaut's description of the Cypriot annexation of Gorhigos is rhetorical rather than factual. It was more a diplomatic than a military triumph. The citizens of the city (located on the Karamanian coast) owed allegiance to the Cilician Armenians, whose weakened kingdom was threatened by the Turks. Fearing capture, the townspeople offered the city

to Pierre just as they had done some years before to Hugues IV (who declined, fearing Turkish anger). Makhairas records: "In those days the men of Gorhigos sent envoys to the most high King Peter, on the eighth of January 1360, Michael Psararis and Costas Philitsis, Greeks; and they commended all the people of Gorhigos and of the island to the king and to his council. And when he read the letters and understood that they were handing themselves over to himself—and the king was anxious to possess land in Turkey—he received them with great joy and honour" (101). As the *Chronique de Strambaldi* records, the Armenians in Gorhigos had previously offered the city to Pierre's father, but he declined, citing God's will: "Iddio non voglia che io toglia il castello al mio zerman." When Pierre was crowned, however, they sent another embassy, impressed by the young man's reputation: "Et quando si incoronò, et si publicò per il mondo le buone opere de re Pier, desiderono li buttarsi alle sue brazza et mandorono le donne de Curico imbasatori al re Piero a di 8 zener 1361, de Christo" (43). For his part, Pierre considered the prospect of a secure base in Anatolia too rich a prize to pass up. His delegate, an English knight named Robert, took peaceful possession in January 1360. Gorhigos remained part of the Cypriot kingdom (and an important stop on its trading routes) well into the next century when, in 1448, it was lost to the Turks. Hill 1940–52 comments: "Good fortune placed in Peter's hands, at the very beginning of his reign, the opportunity of establishing himself on the coast of Asia Minor. From a military point of view, he thus protected his rear; commercially, he secured a channel of communication with the interior of Asia Minor, to which caravans brought the products of Central Asia" (320). For further geographical and historical information (including excellent photographs) about the Armenian territories involved in Pierre's crusading activities, see Boase 1971, 1978.

Lines 641–660 Cf. the account of the capture of Adalia in Mézières:

"Et ecce Petrus Ierusalem et Cypri rex quod a iuventute sua desideraverat, videlicet destructionem inimicorum fidei, in lucem produxit. Nam cum exercitu valido manu forti expensis propriis civitatem invictissiman Sathaliam [i.e., Adalia] personaliter adiit, et ipsam foritissime expugnando a Deo gloriose triumphavit, et divitate ordinata et munit cum triumphon modico in regnum suum Cypri reversus est. . . . Et postea venit [i.e., Peter Thomas] in Cyprum, et manus regis pie confortans in cervicem inimicorum fidei, Deo laudabiliter regratiari fecit, processiones et missas solemnes pro victoria Sathaliae instituit, et regem nobiles et etiam populum Cypriensem in destructionem inimicorum fidei mirabiliter a Deo animavit" (96–7).

Gorhigos provided the base necessary for the assault on Adalia (Satalia); the annexation of Gorhigos, in fact, had provoked the Turks into mounting an offensive threat that Pierre intended to preempt by capturing Adalia and environs. He assembled a fleet of some size at Famagusta (reported to be over a hundred vessels) and was aided substantially by Roger des Pins, master of the Hospitallers, and even Pope Innocent VI (both of whom contributed ships to the expedition). The city fell to the first direct assault on August 14, 1361, and was to remain in Cypriot hands until 1373.

Chroniclers and modern scholars disagree about what destruction, if any, occurred with the taking of the city. It is possible that Machaut here mentions a massacre that belongs more to the events of the campaign that followed the successful investing of Adalia. As Makhairas records: "When the host had returned to Cyprus, the emir of Adalia, Takka, collected an army and came and besieged Adalia. And the people went out both on horse and on foot, and chased them away, and they so closely pressed that they left behind their tents and their fear, and it was long before he came again to make war. . . . And he came and began to attack vigorously, and by the power of God the people of Adalia conquered Takka. . . . And in his rage Takka cut off the water which flowed into Adalia" (109). Eventually, the garrison was relieved, and the Cypriots went on the offensive: "Then the admiral took the ships and went to Myra where St. Nicholas was, and he set to and they besieged [the Turks]. And by the help of God he took the castle and ravaged [and slaughtered] as much as he could. . . . And when the admiral left Myra, he had set fire to it and burned the castle" (111, 113).

Lines 661ff Cf. the explanation for Pierre's western expedition in Mézières: "Petrus autem Ierusalem et Cypri rex a iuventute sua desiderio desiderabat liberationem hereditatia suae paternae regni Ierusalem necnon liberationem civitatis sanctae et mundationem eius, in corde suo proponens, quod si a Deo sceptrum Cypri sibi umquam eveniret, in acquisitionem terrae sanctae personam, bona, et regnum exponeret" (102).

The expedition set out in October 1362 with the additional intention of settling with the pope (who had summoned him) the disputed succession to the throne he now occupied. According to Makhairas, the pope was then being pressured by the king of France, who was supporting Hugues's case: "And now we must related the affair of the king of France. He was not content with the allowance which they gave to his cousin the Prince of Galilee [when the king was crowned], but came and laid a case through his envoys before the pope, for giving the kingdom of Cyprus to the [aforesaid] prince. . . . When the pope saw that the king of France was pressing him, and that he had also right on his side, he sent word to the king of Cyprus to go thither in person to defend his cause" (113). Pierre was accompanied by his young son and heir (the eventual Pierre II), Hugues, prince of Galilee, and Philip de Mézières, his chancellor.

By "court of Rome," Machaut means the papal *curia* at Avignon, where Pierre was received by pope Urban V on March 29, 1363. The expedition had in fact landed at Venice some months before (December 5, 1362) and proceeded subsequently to Genoa. Pierre spent considerable time in both cities, which were important trading partners (and commercial rivals) with Cyprus. Genoese and Venetian naval support was vital to any crusading operation. Both communes were cautious but sometimes eager to support military ventures against the Turks and Saracens, in whose country they maintained a substantial commercial presence. Military triumph, extending diplomatic efforts, might bring about trading advantages, especially in these lands that were often weakened by internal dissension. Conversely, a crusade might interrupt the lucrative trafficking in luxury goods, even result in severe sanctions against Venetian and Genoese merchants (this was, in fact, the not unpredictable result of the

destruction of Alexandria). This complex situation explains Venice's initial support of Pierre's efforts (the commune also felt intense papal pressure to go along with his demands), but later desire to effect a premature peace treaty after the taking of Alexandria. A crusade or *passagium* was proclaimed by the pope on April 12, 1363. Jean II of France, there present during much of Pierre's stay at Avignon, was to lead the expedition, which was to be begun within two years. Jean had been resident nearby for some time before Pierre's arrival. His purpose was to further a series of negotiations with the pope, but these came to nothing. Pierre's appearance in Avignon while Jean was at court must have struck both parties as a piece of good luck.

While in Avignon, Pierre also came to an amicable final settlement with his nephew Hugues. Makhairas records: "And when Sir Hugh de Lusignan heard that his uncle the king had come to the pope, he also came, and they made many citations against one another. And after much strife, the pope and the cardinals intervened between them to such effect that they reconciled them according to the terms of the original agreement" (115).

Lines 680ff Machaut's mention of Jean's betrayal by cowards is a reference to the king's defeat at Poitiers six years earlier, a defeat thought by many to have been caused by the flight of many French knights from the field. The huge ransom demanded by the English and the political chaos caused by Jean's prolonged absence from France proved a severe trial to his countrymen. The depredations of the *routiers* or unemployed companies of mercenary soldiers in France actually proved a stimulus to the crusade for it was the hope of Jean and Urban alike that these men might be encouraged to enlist in a crusading army in hopes of great profit. Some of these men undoubtedly did join with Pierre, but not as many as had been hoped.

Lines 709ff The cardinal in question was Elie Talleyrand de Périgord, bishop of Albano.

Machaut recounts the various stages of Pierre's travels throughout Western Europe somewhat out of their chronological order, apparently to make a point about his persistence in the face of adversity. Pierre had already left Avignon and had made his way through part of Germany and Low Countries before Jean took ill and died on April 8, 1364, about a year after taking the cross (Cardinal Talleyrand predeceased him on January 17 of the same year). Pierre, in fact, recently arrived in England, may have encountered Jean again at the court in London, or so Froissart suggests. Though by lineage and political alliance more closely aligned with the Valois in their continuing disputes with the English royal house, Pierre was eager to win any support he could for his cause. Thus he did not, apparently, find it difficult to ask for help from both Edward and the Black Prince. When Jean died, in fact, Pierre was visiting the latter in Angouleme with the hope of gaining the support of his well-known knight for his expedition. Hearing the news, Pierre proceeded to the side of the dauphin, Charles, duke of Normandy, who was waiting along with his two brothers for the arrival of their father's corpse from England.

Lines 825ff Charles faced not only a continuing threat from the English, but also the constant depredations of the "great companies" or *routiers.* His refusal to sponsor the crusade is understandable, but also ironic since the popes of the period, including Urban V, attempted to deal with this problem by encouraging the crusade, both against them and, paradoxically, with them as participants. As Housley 1982 states, "The popes issued crusading indulgences to those who fought against the *routiers* on the grounds that they presented a serious threat to the well-being of the Christian community. . . . But the popes also hoped to use the companies in the service of Christian Holy war by persuading them to travel to the eastern Mediterranean, to Hungary or to Granada, to fight the Muslims" (253).

Line 949 The elector was Rudolf II.

Line 1009 At this point, Mas Latrie makes an error in numbering the lines of the poem, mistakenly identifying line 1009 as 1010. All subsequent lines in this edition and translation therefore do not conform to those in Mas Latrie's edition. To convert Mas Latrie's numbering after this point to the correct figure, simply add 1 to his total.

Lines 1147ff The translation offers rough modern equivalents if available for the instruments Machaut names. When these instruments have no modern equivalents, the original terms are used and are herein explained according to the discussion in Machabey 1955 (see Earp 1995 for full bibliography; the identification and description of these instruments is a far from settled scholarly question).

The *monochord* is a straight harmony box with a single string passing from one end to the other over two frets. It was apparently placed on the musician's knees and played with either the fingers or a *plectum.* The *psaltery* or *psalterion* is also a harmony box, rather flat, apparently trapezoidal in shape, with a round opening in its center, and strung with cords, usually metallic and varying in number from seven to ten, perhaps as many as seventeen. The term *rota* normally designates the same instrument, sometimes with a triangular shape, but may refer to a different variety of stringed instrument as well. A smaller version of the *canon* is the *micanon*, another instrument similar to the *psalterion.* The *ruhebe* resembled the viola and consisted of two, three, or four strings. The "English" *eschiquier* is another stringed instrument, played with keys, distant ancestor of the modern piano. "Aussay" *musettes* resemble bagpipes but without an airbag. The *cornemuse*, *doucine*, and *demi-doucine* are instruments of the same general type. For an interesting discussion of the difficulties involved in identifying the specific features of these instruments and of the important place of Machaut's several poetic catalogs for this area of research see Bec 1992, especially pp. 61–151.

Lines 1235ff The monarchs mentioned in this passage are Louis I of Hungary and Casimir III of Poland.

Lines 1271–4 Scholars have disagreed about the identification of these cities. See the discussion in Iorga 1896, 94–5.

Line 1413 The duke in question is Rudolf IV of Austria.

Line 1525 Machaut mentions here two of the smaller rivers in the region. The geographical precision of his account, as elsewhere, is surprising.

Lines 1535ff Machaut is correct in suggesting that Pierre was greeted fittingly by his friends and allies in Venice upon his return. But he did not handle the negotiations for aid with the Venetians at this point, which would have been much too late for adequate preparations. It is more plausible to believe, with Philippe de Mézières, that his chancellor and the legate Peter de Thomas had been successful some months previously with convincing the reluctant commune to assist Pierre against their trading partners:

"Nobis autem advenientibus Venetias, et duci et consilio causa nostri adventus exposita, et responsione debili habita, magnum contrarium nostrae petitionis et passagii invenimus (115–117) Tandem in fine, Deo cuius opus erat operante et sermones patris mei confirmante, illud [i.e., the agreement to cooperate] quod Venetis omnibus impossible his diebus videbatur, ipsis velut Catholici et devoti patri meo (i.e., Peter de Thomas) vice regis ad terminum suum obtulerunt . . . Nam Veneti morte regis Franciae et insulae suae Cretensis perditione necnon et aliis multiplicibus impedimentis non obstantibus, in honorem sancti passagii et reverentiam et amicitiam regis Cypris navigia ad terminum ordinatum pro duobus millibus militibus cum eorum equis, armis, familiaribus, and victualibus pro tribus mensibus in terram soldani vel cuiuscumque fidei inimici transfretanda secundum voluntatem ipsius regis obtulerunt" (115–117)

When Pierre arrived later than scheduled, he found but few forces in Venice. The rulers of Western Europe had failed to support him with either money or men or supplies. He seems then to have fallen into a profound depression until receiving spiritual comfort from the legate:

"Tunc rex de principibus Christianorum desperatus, termino suo multo tempore elapso, et sine adiutorio de Deo confisus, cum pausis, omnibus de passagio desperatis, Venetias est reversus, et a Venetis magnifice receptus. Sed ille qui in rebus desperatis fortior erat, et ipsas res ad finem bonum Deo operante perducebat, videlicet pater meus legatus, obviam regi ivit, et ipsum lacrimantem et de labore suo et termino perditis lamentantem invenit. Legatus vero regi compatiens, a Spiritu Sancto ipsum dulciter et multis argumentis confortavit, et ut in Deum totam spem suam poneret, retro non respiceret, ad aratrum manum fortem poneret, et Deus ipsum adiuvaret, ipsum pie admonuit. Rex autem a Deo et verbis legati consolatus magnalia in honorem Deo cogitans, vires resumpsit" (121).

Lorenzo Celsi was doge at this time.

Line 1602 Makhairas (147) offers a full list of the important Cypriot knights who accompanied Pierre. Several of these are mentioned by name in Machaut's account of the attack on Alexandria.

Line 1609 Actually, Pierre left Venice in late June or early July 1365. Iorga 1896 and Edbury 1991 are the most trustworthy modern authorities for dating the major events of the crusade

Line 1851 The deaths of Jean of France and Cardinal Talleyrand haunted the beginning stages of Urban's plans for a grand crusade, as Machaut notes in an earlier passage. However the poet neglects to mention the

untimely death of a third important supporter of the crusade, Roger des Pins, Grand Master of the Hospitallers. He died unexpectedly on May 28, 1365 just as Pierre was making plans to leave Venice for Rhodes. Fortunately for the expedition, the new grand master, Raymond Bérenger of Provence, looked favorably upon the pope's wishes for a crusade. He was well known to Pierre because he had held since 1361 the office of commander of the Hospitallers in Cyprus. See Delaville Le Roulx 1913 for further details of this important development. He writes that "The Hospital put at the king's disposition sixteen galleys and a contingent of one hundred knights under the command of Ferlino d'Airsaca, admiral of the order and prior of Lombardy. . . . The king, having at the instigation of the Grand Master agreed to come to terms with the emirs of Paltscha and Ephesus—who feared a crusade directed toward them—embarked free of any concern about the coast of Asia Minor" (152).

Lines 1875ff The catalog of different ships is certainly a tour de force for Machaut, who spent most of his life far from the sea. Rough modern equivalents have been provided in the translation in so far as possible, but the interested reader is referred to Roques 1986 and Pryor 1988, 57–86, for further information about the specifics of the different types of vessels. In his *Songe du Vieil Pelerin*, Philippe de Mézières argues for the importance of the *taforesse*, a transport vessel, rather like a modern LST (landing ship tank), with a low board that enabled mounted horsemen to be debarked directly on the shore: "Tafforresse est un vaisseau de mer qui va a vingt ou a trente advirons et porte de xvi a xx chevaulx. Et a le dit vaisseau une grant porte en la poupe et ne lui fault que deux our troys paulmes d'eaue. Et toutes les fois que ladicte taforesse en terre doit arriver encontre les ennemis, les gens d'armes seront montez sus les chevaulx dedans le vaisseau, le bacinet en la teste et la lance ou poing et, sans nul destourber, aussi comme en un moment, hystront du vaisseau et yront courre souddainement sus leurs ennemis. Et s'ilz sont chaciez, ils rentreront tout a cheval dedans la taforesse, malgre leurs ennemis, et tantost se retrayront en mer. Telx vaisseaulx sont bonnes et propres aux grans riveres et flumaires des ennemis. Et fera plus de dommage une taforesse que ne feroient deux ou troys galees armees . . . il fu exprouve a la prinse d'Alixandre, car le vaillant roy de Chippre, Pierre de Lizignien, (ent) entre les vaisseaulx de sa gracieuse petite armee, avoit desdictes tafforesses environ xvi, qui furent tresbonnes preuves. Et quant a la despense desdictes taforesses, pour la despence d'une galee armee on aura quatre taforesses" (Coopland 1969, II: 435–6).

Line 1947 The fleet consisted of 165 vessels of different sizes, according to Bustron: "Li quale venne a Rhodi, et trovò l'armata in porto, ch'era de galee 33, fuste 6, nave 9, barchi 13, vasselli da condur cavalli 11 et altri navigli 20, che feco la somma de vele 92. Et feceno armar a Rhodi anchora altri galee et navigli per accompagnar l'armata del re fino la somma de vele, tra picole e grande, 165" (262).

Lines 1961ff This scene is historically unlikely for three reasons. Although there was a knight named Perceval from, presumably, Coulonges or Coulon in Poitou who served Pierre, perhaps as chamberlain, Machaut is substituting him for Philippe de Mézières in the role of the king's chief

advisor, both at this crucial moment and at other times. See the introduction for a discussion of Machaut's decision to eliminate the famed crusader from his recounting of Pierre's accomplishments. Moreover, crusading theory had, since the time of St. Louis, held that any full-scale assault against the Saracens must begin with the establishment of a base of operations in Egypt; hence such an important strategic decision would not have been based simply on the recommendation of a trusted lieutenant. Finally, it hardly seems likely that Pierre would have gone this far in his project without having made a strategic plan.

Lines 2083ff Machaut neglects to recount the blessing of the fleet by Peter de Thomas, an impressive ceremony according to Philippe de Mézières:

"Legatus autem personis ecclesiasticis totius exercitus associatus in galeam regis ascendit pro benedictione generali exercitus Dei fienda, et ascenso in eminentiori loco galeae, ut ab omni exercitu videri posset, rege prope ipsum stante, et omnibus stantibus et legatum respicientibus, omnibus signis et vexillis galearum et aliorum navigiorum depositis, legatus quamdam longam et inauditam atque pulcherrimam benedictionem a Spiritu Sancto incepit, antiquum testamentum et novum in benedictione allegando, modo navigia, modo arma, modo personas, modo mare, modo totum exercitum benedicendo, in honorem crucis et Saracenorum destructionem auxilium Dei invocando" (128).

Line 2100 Crambousa is a small island off the coast of Asia Minor, near Cape Khelidonia, east of Myra.

Lines 2196ff Cf. the very similar description of the opening stages of the battle in Mézières:

"Saraceni vero exercitum Christianorum in portu ipsorum respicientes, non modicum admirati et turbati fuerunt. Exeuntes autem Saraceni de civitate Alexandriae cum multitudine populi infiniti, ut portum nobis defenderent, in campo phalangas suas coram nobis ordinaverunt. Erat autem dies Iovis et hora quasi sexta. Sed rex ut distinctim et ordinata inimicos crucis invaderet, sua signa daret, et modum bellandi et quae pertinebant ad militiam ordinaret, consilio ventilato illo die Iovis requievit, et in terram non descendit. Videntes autem Saraceni quod exercitus Christianorum ad terram non descendebat, animati ad timorem nobis reputaverunt. Sed Deus nobiscum existens hoc manifeste fecit ad malorem victoriam et gloriam sui nominis habendam. Stantibus nobis sic, strenuitatem patris mei legati et martyrii eius ardentem voluntatem tacere non possem. Nam Saraceni in turmis suis multiplicatis sapienter et strenue in litore portus ordinati vociferantes, nos ad terram descendere expectantes, legatus adhuc causam nesciens nostrae retardationis inimicos invadendi, mihi eum magno furore desiderii clamando dixit. . . . Pulsante vero regis buccina, gradatim et paulatim secundum ordinem datum galeae et alia navigia versus terram remigare inceperunt, et appropinquantibus terram, Saracenis ultra quam credi posset viriliter portum defendentibus, navigia nostra sagittis cooperunt. Tanta enim multitudo sagittarum super Christianos tunc cadebat sicut pluvia super terram, sed contra consuetudinem humanam Deo defendente paucos et quasi nullos laedebant, psalmista dicente *Cadente a latere tuo*, etc. Galeis autem terram appropinquantibus, scalas ut in terram descenderent nostri in mari iuxta litus vi

armorum proiecerunt, sed Saraceni ballistas nostras non timentes, in mari usque ad pectus intrabant, clipeis eorum cooperti, exitum nostrorum viriliter defendebant. . . . Tunc Christiani nostri qui citius poterant in terram descendebant, et Saraceni versus civitatem fugientes terga verterunt, nostri vero persequentes et ipsos occidentes usque ad portam civitatis ipsos prosequebantur" (130–2).

Line 2220 Saracen sources suggest that this multitude was not an army, but rather merchants and townsmen eager to do business with what they initially thought was a fleet of trading ships. As Atiya 1938 states, "they had no experience of wars or sieges at home and in their ignorance they came out of their stronghold in the face of death" (353–4). When the Alexandrians did realize they were going to be attacked, a detachment of Maghribine volunteers waded into the water in order to forestall the landing of the crusaders. The Saracen chronicler al-Nuwairi states that these men ordered slings and other inflammable materials in hope of firing the ships, but the by then frightened townspeople could not meet this request. Lightly armed, the Maghribines were easily disposed by the heavily armored crusaders, who had the further advantage of striking at them from the height of their galley decks.

Lines 2267ff Because he held two kingships, one real (Cyprus) and the other fictional (Jerusalem), Pierre was served by two marshals, Simon Thinoly for Jerusalem and Jean de Morf for Cyrpus. Ordinarily, neither of these officers would also serve as admiral, but recent troubles with the Genoese had made it politically necessary for Pierre to suspend Jean de Sur from this office (which he regained not long after the campaign and held until his death in 1366, when he was succeeded by Jean de Monstry). Machaut's account of Pierre's life is filled with correct minor details of this kind, indicating the general, overall excellence of his various sources and his own careful use of them.

Line 2294 The prince of Galilee was Hugues of Lusignan, the king's nephew and former frustrated claimant of the throne of Cyprus.

Lines 2307ff This is the same knight who subsequently advises abandoning the captured city and persuades many others to do so. See lines 3325ff.

Lines 2500ff The contingent from the Hospital was led by Ferlino d'Airsaca, who embarked at the so-called New Port, located to the east of the city in the direction of Rosetta. Al-Nuwairi emphasizes the importance of the speedy assault of these warriors, who were conveyed to battle on specially built ships that allowed them to be mounted before disembarking. Despite a continuing shower of missiles, they gained the shore and closed toward the Old Port, effectively trapping the hordes of Saracens with a pincers movement.

Lines 2537ff The governor of Alexandria was then absent on a pilgrimage to Mecca, and his deputy, a certain Janghara, had little military experience or expertise. Janghara ordered a mixed force of Bedouin cavalry and infantry, which was not numerous, to make a stand before the city, but these were swept away by the determined assault of the heavily armed Christian knights. Machaut fails to note that a significant part of this suc-

cess was achieved by Pierre's happy deployment of a company of archers, who harassed the enemy cavalry and threw its horses into a panic. Janghara was himself painfully wounded in the melee, but managed to escape inside the city before the gates were shut. If Machaut does not overestimate the number of defenders, and that is possible, he does not distinguish between trained armed forces, which were few in number, and the townspeople, who were forced to act in their own defense.

Lines 2645ff Machaut may be using the word "amiraut" in its looser and general sense of "baron" or "lord." The speaker here, then, could be any one of a number among the higher nobility in Pierre's company who advocated withdrawal from the strongly defended town. Conversely, Machaut may be referring here to either Jean de Morf or Ferlino d'Airsaca. It is likely, as Iorga 1896 (294) asserts, that both of these men were later prominent in the group of "rebels" who refused to remain in Alexandria in accordance with Pierre's plan. Delaville Le Roulx 1913 believes that it was the leader of the Hospitallers who counseled an excessive caution, both during the battle and after the taking of the city: "since the beginning of the expedition, Ferlino d'Airsaca had not ceased showing an excessive prudence. Did he exaggerate the dangers of a permanent occupation just as he had exaggerated the difficulties of assaulting Alexandria? Or was it that his experience in the Orient justified his cautions and advice? Was he afraid, at least for his own contingent, about the casualty rate of his horses, which threatened to paralyze the movements of his knights for the remainder of the campaign? Whatever motives he responded to, he declared himself in favor of retreat, and his influence had a decisive effect" (154).

Lines 2750ff Al-Nuwairi offers a more plausible version of the successful assault on the city than Machaut. As Atiya (1938, 358–60) summarizes his account, the Christians first attacked the gate that lay directly opposite their position on the "island" they had won after their landing. Approaching the Bab al-Bahr (the Gate of the Sea), they were met with a storm of arrows, lances, and stones. A Christian attempt to push a large vessel of burning naphtha close enough to the gate so that it might be fired failed because of the skill and diligence of the archers on the walls above. Reforming on the shore of the eastern harbor, the crusaders then noticed that the Bab al-Diwan (which Machaut refers to as the Gate of the Douane) was undefended and that there was no moat at this place to prevent their approach. As the attackers brought up ladders to scale the walls and did their best to burn the gate, the defenders attempted to man this part of their defenses but were prevented from so doing by a tower that interrupted the wall at this point. No porches or walkways connected these two parts of the wall. Access could have been afforded through the customs house, but this had been locked as soon as battle was joined by an official who was later accused, perhaps rightly, of being in Pierre's pay.

Line 2912 The "conduit" was the canal where water from the Nile was brought into the city. It was apparently undefended, and the sailor was able to enter the city through it and then climb the staircase inside to mount the wall.

Lines 3064–6 Literally, "with only a basket full of swallows," that is, without much at all.

Lines 3321ff Those urging immediate departure included, according to Philippe de Mézières, Jean de Sur, the admiral of Cyprus, and Pierre's two brothers. Guillaume Roger was viscount of Turenne. In recounting the what he regarded as an ignominious retreat, Machaut shows a bias toward the members of Pierre's force who were of French blood and supporters of the Valois (i.e., not owing their allegiance to the English). It was not only the "foreign" knights who advocated withdrawal, but also most of his intimates and chief advisors, Philippe de Mézières and Peter de Thomas excepted.

Lines 3563ff These Saracens were the first elements of the relief army sent by Cairo under the command of the emir Qutlobogha al-Mansuri. The city's governor, who had been on pilgrimage in Mecca, was immediately ordered by Yalbogha to return to Alexandria with another force that likely reached the suburbs of the city by October 13.

Lines 3610ff Cf. the account of these events in Mézières.

"Corda indurata et iniquitate percussa fuerunt [i.e., those advocating retreat], et regem dolentem et legatum prae dolore quasi morientem reprobi vicerunt, de recessu concludendo, de Deo desperando et de potentia eius non confisi, et victorias eius inaduitas prorsus fuerunt obliti. . . . Rex vero in consilio suo victus, Deo permittente, Alexandriam relinquens, et nemine inimicorum persequente, in galeam quiete ascendit, et noster exercitus in navigia se recollegit, versum Cyprum tendentes, paradisum relinquentes, in pelagum navigaverunt. Sed quid fecit Deus nobis? Tantam fortunam in mari miscuit quod omnia navigia nostra divisit, fortunam fugiendo et quasi periclitando. Sed qui antea timore percussi sine causa Alexandriam reliquerunt tantum timorem in mari habuerunt, tantum mortem hi timebant, remanisse Alexandriam affectantes, et peccatum suum cognoscentes" (136).

Lines 3643ff Machaut here omits reference to the important mission of Jean de Sur, who was entrusted with letters to the pope and other Western rulers, asking for further support. As Makhairas records: "First he went to Rome, and when the pope heard the admiral's news [of the victory of the king in Syria] he rejoiced greatly and all Rome with him. And when they heard of the victory of the Christians of Cyprus, the rulers of the West were filled with zeal, and took counsel to prepare an expedition to come to the ports of Cyprus to help the king in Syria" (155). Reaction in Venice, however, was quite different: "Now when the Republic of Venice heard the news about Alexandria, they were bitterly vexed, because the greatest profit of their trading was there and in all Syria. At once they sent envoys and advocates to the sultan with the message that the fleet which came to Alexandria did not come by their desire, nor did they know of it, nor had they helped the king" (157).

Lines 3647ff None of the extant manuscripts includes the names promised here, so perhaps Machaut was unable to provide them because his source or memory failed (which, admittedly, seems strange compared to his encyclopedic inclusion of others; it is hard to see why he would have written a

short passage of introduction but did not know what exactly it should introduce). In any event, Machaut did not remove the resulting inconsistent passage from the poem, nor did any of the scribes, including those of G and E who were most inclined to correct such problems by innovating.

Lines 3771ff According to Makhairas, the mission was assigned to Monstry (or Moustry, as some sources give his name) on April 25, 1366: "King Peter, having returned to Cyprus, ordered the construction of galleys and light ships and many other vessels, to go to Syria to take Beyrout, which is close to Cyprus, a hundred and seventy miles by sea" (157). However, Makhairas does not report that at the insistence of the Venetians the destination was changed to Asia Minor.

Lines 3844ff The sultan at the time was a boy of about eleven named Sha'Ban who had been placed on the throne by the most powerful of the Mamluk emirs, a man named Yalbogha. According to Egyptian sources summarized by Atiya (1938, 352), Yalbogha was a cruel and greedy man, eager for power and without scruples about how he achieved it.

Lines 3936–8 The grammatical sense of these lines is somewhat difficult to follow though the general meaning is clear enough.

Lines 3943ff Makhairas suggests that Pierre was persuaded to halt his intended raid on Syria by more than good will. According to the chronicler, the envoys made him the following offer, which he apparently accepted: "And if you chance to be in need of money because of this same expedition for the expense you have been at in paying the men, we will pay it all and make good your losses, a service which you have had from us on other occasions also" (159).

Lines 4215ff Machaut omits to mention that with the departure of the sultan's ambassadors, those from Venice returned home with the premature and essentially false news that peace had been concluded. Makhairas records: "When the Venetians saw that they had made a beginning of making peace, they embarked on their galley and went to Venice and told the news. And when this came to the hearing of the lords who were making ready for the eastward journey to Syria, they broke off and did not come, and this did great harm to the Christians" (163).

Line 4220 Literally, a "road made of iron." The reference is to the practice of paving roads with the rock turned up from iron mines.

Lines 4471ff Makhairas suggests that the envoy from Gorhigos told Pierre that the Grand Caraman was acting on orders from the sultan, which the sultan's envoy, there present, then denied: "[When the king heard this, he at once] sent and brought the sultan's envoy before him, and they read the letters out to him. And when the envoy heard them, he said: 'God forbid that this should be done by my lord'" (175).

This expedition is not discussed in much detail by the Cypriot chroniclers. Machaut, of course, takes this opportunity to praise the exploits of the French knights present, whose individual accomplishments were much more notable here, perhaps, than at Alexandria. The *Chronique d'Amadi*, for example, states: "Venero novo al re da Curico, come la Caramania si metteva in ordine per assediate ditto castello; et il re immediate fece armar

10 galie and fece capitanio de esse el principe suo fratello, et patroni messer Philippo de Iblim, signor d'Arsuf, messer Joan de Iblim, sinescalco de Hierusalem, messer Philippo, conte de Bresvig, et altri cavalieri; et si partirono l'ultimo di frever 1366, da Famagosta, et andorono al ditto castello, dove trovorono grande hoste de Turchi, che tenivano assediato el castello. El principe, con tutta la sua gente et con quelli de Curico, ussiteno fora, et feceno giornata con li Turchi, et li rompeteno et occiseno, et preseno molti Turchi, et etiam preseno assai tende et artellarie sue; et a di quatuordise marzo 1367, ritorno la ditta armata in Famagusta" (416).

Line 4557 The office of *turcoplier* was important in Cyprus, as the remainder of the poem demonstrates. The *turcoplier* was the officer in charge of the native Cypriot troops known as *turcoples*.

Line 4686 The reference to the Saracens as the people of Apollo is a convention of the *chanson de geste*. The idea is that these people worship a trinity of gods, including Mohammed and Tervagant.

Lines 4796ff The description of the military situation at Gorhigos is not particularly clear. Makhairas indicates that, in addition to the seaport and the castle, there were two outlying tower defenses, one of which had been taken by the Turks: "This expedition left Famagusta and went to Gorhigos; and they found the castle besieged and a great host of Turks who had also taken the tower which was built on the rock near the well outside the castle, over against the tower called the Tower of the Region of the Halfcastes" (177). For pictures and further topographical details see Boase 1971, 1978.

Lines 5453ff Makhairas sums up the victory in similar terms: "The prince ordered the men of Gorhigos to make a sally, and they attacked in force, and God gave the victory to the Christians, and they routed the Turks so that they took flight; and they took many of them alive, and many Turks were killed, and the Christians captured much material of war, and their tents and much gear, and they also gave the Great Karaman many wounds, and they further took the tower which the Turks had taken" (177).

Line 5549 The Caraman, it seems likely, decided upon this sudden retreat from Gorhigos because he was troubled by the news of Yalbogha's assassination in Cairo and the fact that negotiations with the Cypriots had been resumed by the sultan's ambassadors.

Lines 5695ff Machaut gets the details of this proposal incorrect. The king demanded a reduction by half of the duties paid by Cypriot merchants for the goods they imported into the lands of the sultan. He is also wrong about the details of the proposed treaty. It would have been completely unreasonable for Pierre to ask for the remission of all taxes paid by pilgrims to the sultan; this amount was considerable and thus an important source of revenue. Instead, Pierre asked for the remission of the taxes on all those coming from Cyprus who carried his official letter; this would have included family members, government officials, and others to the limit of fifty a year, as Cypriot records confirm.

Lines 5735ff The column to which Machaut refers was at the time carefully guarded in the Church of the Holy Sepulchre with its own private chapel.

Line 5807 Makhairas gives this man's name as Sir Peter de Canel, which can only be a corruption, and describes him as "a merchant of worth" (179).

Lines 5827ff Machaut, or his source, has confused the two embassies sent to the sultan. The first, led by Paul de Belonia, Jean d'Alfonso, and George Settica, all influential Catalans, was sent by Pierre in response to Venetian entreaties. Having dismissed his foreign troops and expecting no immediate reinforcements from the West because of the premature announcement of a treaty by the Venetians, Pierre at that time was inclined to negotiate. A condition of such negotiations demanded by the sultan was the immediate return of all remaining Alexandrian captives, which was expedited by Paul de Belonia upon Pierre's command.

During the troubles at Gorhigos, Pierre continued to entertain another Saracen embassy in what was becoming protracted negotiations about peace. These negotiations were apparently proceeding toward an agreement of the kind here described by Machaut. As the poet later affirms, however, the peaceful overtures of the Saracens were in fact an attempt to play for time until military preparations were further advanced. Yalbogha, the sultan's regent, was engaged in building a huge fleet to launch a punitive raid against Cyprus, but was killed in an internal dispute with his peers, as Machaut later records. Makhairas recounts: "In Cairo there had been a great quarrel with the sultan and between the [Mameluke] emirs, and they had killed the great emir who ruled the Moslem people, named El Bogha el Azizi because it was his will and his advice to the sultan that peace should be made with Cyprus" (177). According to Makhairas, this change of regime put the peace process in jeopardy, a judgment echoed by Machaut, and this upset the Genoese, who agreed that an embassy should be sent to Cairo commanded by the turcoplier and including Aragonese and Genoese representatives. Apparently, it is this expedition that is recounted here.

Line 6106 Machaut's *par lebech* is a metaphorical reference to the *Lebeccio*, a characteristic harsh wind of the region.

Line 6057 The word *flumaire* is not Arabic but French, probably from the Latin *flumen*.

Lines 6251ff Makhairas agrees with Machaut about the importance of this Christian renegade. In fact he makes him an intermediary between the sultan and the turcoplier after the latter's undiplomatic presentation of Pierre's proposals—see lines 6550ff. Hearing the sultan's angry dismissal of his embassy, the turcoplier "had a friend, a Genoese, who had turned Moslem; his name was Sir de Lort the Usher, and in the Saracen language they called him Nasr-ed-Din—he sent and summoned him and gave him fitting presents so that he also could give presents to the sultan and to (all) the [high] emirs who would be of use in the matter, and begged him that his dismissal from the sultan should be managed as quickly as possible" (185).

Line 6372 Babylon or New Babylon was what the crusaders of this time ordinarily termed Old Cairo. The name Cairo was reserved for so-called Greater Cairo, the city built on the northern side of the original city.

Lines 6446ff Machaut here describes the Baharides, the corps of personal guards for the sultan from whom the Mameluke sultans were chosen.

Lines 6505ff Makhairas suggests that the turcoplier's approach to the sultan was hardly diplomatic: "He spoke to him with great boldness and freedom, saying to him that sovereign rulers ought not to promise to make peace and then change their minds again. . . . And he added many other words both sharp and unseemly, boasting of his master's lofty birth, and that he was a sovereign prince" (183). Angered, the sultan was eager to punish the turcoplier, as the *Chronique de Strambaldi* records: "Et udendo il sultano si adirò fortemente et comandò che fosse desteso in terra et battuto" (80). He was dissuaded by an "emir" who advised that no future embassies would be sent to the court should this be done. Then the sultan is reported to have dismissed the turcoplier, but without a final agreement. Machaut makes this incident part of a subsequent visit by the embassy to the sultan's court (see lines 6550ff), suggesting that Saracen anger was aroused not by the turcoplier's obstreperous behavior but by the sack of Alexandria, for which some in the court—but not the sultan—desired revenge on the spot.

Line 6912 The attack on Tripoli was not the unqualified victory Machaut suggests. As Makhairas relates, a Saracen ambush killed many among his disordered raiding party: "And when they turned back to embark on the galleys, the Saracens [came out and] were slaying them; for they were in disorder and had no captain to lead them; and were going in twos and threes, being sure that the Saracens were safely in their houses . . . and the Saracens were concealed among the hedges and in the reedbeds that were in the gardens. . . . And thus they were able to shoot at them and killed many of them. When the king perceived this, and saw that they were isolated, and the town had no protecting wall, he became afraid lest an host should attack him and kill him: he ordered the trumpet to sound for the people to come together, and when they had got together, they embarked on the galleys" (191).

Lines 6963ff Layas or Ayasi, Lajazzo (forms with initial *l* from the French definite article) was the principal port of ancient Armenia on the Gulf of Alexandretta, an important center of trade in the eastern Mediterranean and a stop on the Genoese trade route from Sivas to Famagusta in Cyprus. See Boase 1971, 1978 for further details.

Line 6997 Tortosa was the site of a castle of the Templars, lost to the Saracens early in the fourteenth century. The city included a famous and much venerated church, the Cathedral of Notre Dame, and remained a destination for pilgrims in Pierre's time. Banias (Valena, Valania, Machaut's Valence) was the site of an episcopal see on the Syrian coast. Laodicea was a small port city protected by a fortified tower.

Line 6998 Literally, "those who are freed from the task of peeling garlic."

Line 7114 The king's motive for withdrawal was more likely a desire to preserve the strength of his army, as Makhairas describes: "They decided it was better to retreat rather than that the king should expose his people to so much danger, and labour without any profit. . . . And thus they departed with honour" (195).

Line 7227 The reference here is to the "great companies" of often unemployed mercenaries and freebooters who posed a strong threat to social order in France and Italy during this period. See Housley 1982 for full discussion.

Line 7302 Machaut is incorrect. A definitive treaty was not agreed upon until 1370, that is, after Pierre's death and during the reign of his son, Pierre II.

Lines 7420ff Relying on the account of Henri Giblet, Rabanis 1843 offers an explanation for the quarrel that is eminently plausible and accords with what Machaut and other writers like Makhairas have to say about both the sire de Rochefort and the sire de Lesparre, men arrogant and explosive, much like Pierre himself. Apparently, both Rochefort and Lesparre were among a group of nobles who accused Jean Monstry, the admiral of Cyprus, of some grievous breach of Christian behavior. This quarrel erupted in the presence of Pierre and other high Cypriot dignitaries, and both Rochefort and Lesparre made it clear that they considered themselves above the law and the equals of anyone there present. Though they ceased their wrangling upon Pierre's command, both men apparently made it clear that they did so only in deference to his title and that they considered him no more moral than Monstry, whom he was protecting. In other words, both Rochefort and Lesparre acted insolently, in a manner consistent with their subsequent challenge to Pierre. Only the sire de Lesparre actually made arrangements to meet with Pierre on the field of battle, but eventually changed his mind and, after much intercession by the pope, did agree to reconcile with his former lord.

Lines 7490ff Perhaps the most remarkable aspect of the *Prise* is its incorporation of two letters that purport to have been written by the sire de Lesparre and one in response that purports to have been written by Pierre.

Are these letters genuine in the sense that they are exact copies or more or less faithful to the originals? The question is difficult to answer. On the one hand, it is hard to explain why, in regard to what is after all a minor episode, Machaut should go to the considerable trouble of forging such letters, which have struck many modern scholars as eminently plausible (see, for example, Rabanis 1843 and Iorga 1896). On the other hand, how could such letters or copies of them have come into his possession? The poet's principal sources, Jean of Reims and Gautier of Conflans, were undoubtedly present during the events in question, but it is difficult to account for how either of them—or indeed any of the other forty or so knights from northern France—might have come into possession of the pertinent correspondence. The poem states that Perceval of Coulonges acted as Pierre's intermediary in the West, but it is more likely that this role was actually played by Philippe de Mézières. Could these letters have made their way west with him when he returned there after the assassina-

tion? If so, how did they come to Machaut's hand? In favor of such a possibility is the fact that to one of the manuscripts of the *Vita* of St. Peter Thomas a letter from Pierre arguing for his canonization has been appended. Certainly, Philippe would have had some access to Pierre's correspondence in general, and perhaps to this correspondence in particular. If Machaut did obtain the letters from Philippe, then it is even stranger that the poet does not acknowledge even the existence of the chamberlain in the poem. Interestingly, Machaut acknowledges no source for the letters, though his original readers must also have wondered about them. A further point in favor of the letters' genuineness is that in the *Voir Dit* Machaut does incorporate the actual correspondence (though it is sometimes extensively rewritten) that passed between him and a young female admirer. The authenticity of this correspondence, long a matter of scholarly debate, has been firmly established by Leech-Wilkinson and Palmer 1998.

Lines 7607ff This money was difficult to raise, and the attempt to do so certainly did not improve the already strained relations between Pierre and the Cypriot nobility. As Makhairas relates: "And the king had need of ducats for his expenses; the burden lay upon Sir John de Castia, who was chamberlain of the king of Cyprus, and had control of all the revenues of the kingdom of Cyprus. And he had spent all that he had, and had nothing upon which to lay his hand. Seeing that if he were not able to find a means to get money, he would be punished and put to shame by the king, he made a proclamation on behalf of the king, that if any one desired to be freed, and whoever had vineyards and other heritages and desired to free them, he should come to the chamberlain" (197).

Lines 7624ff After Pierre's arrival in Rome, messengers were sent. According to Makhairas, these "bade the Sieur de Lesparre to come [to Rome] 'because the king has come and is ready to give you an answer to any complaint which you may wish to make against him, and he is also ready even to do battle with you.' When the Sieur de Lesparre heard that the king of Cyprus had come—and he had been thinking that he would not come—then the Sieur de Lesparre also came and went to the lords and begged them to consent to intervene between the king and himself, and to make peace between them, because he had repented of what he had said about the king" (199).

Line 7800 Medieval tradition maintained that it was a Roman soldier (the blind Longinus) who pierced Jesus in the side with a lance, not one of the Jews who condemned him. It is surprising that Machaut makes such an error here.

Lines 7894 Makhairas offers a quite similar account of these events: "And the pope rejoiced greatly at this reconciliation and invited them to dine with him. And when they had finished eating, Mesire Florimond de Lesparre rose up and took the sweetmeats, and served the pope and the king of Cyprus. And thus peace was made between the king and the Sieur de Lesparre" (199). Bustron records the speech made by Pierre: "Ogni ingiuria ch'io vi facessi stando a questo modo, reputarci esser mia; haverei havuto caro che tu t'havessi disposto di combatter meco, perchè s'haveria

conosciuto il valor tuo, et il mio, et quando t'havesti portato bene, m'havreste fatto più tuo amico; ma se tu non hai voluto combatter, per haver conosciuto el torto da conto tuo, ti laudo et perdono" (267)

Lines 7936ff Makhairas suggests that Pierre was still eager, despite the pope's misgivings to launch another expedition against the sultan, perhaps in support of the king of Armenia: "Favours were shown and promises were made to the king of Cyprus by the rulers of the West, who said that they would accompany him with a great host to destroy the sultan. And the Sieur de Lesparre urgently pressed the pope and the other rulers of the West to make this expedition and that the pope should press them to come" (199).

Lines 8029ff Machaut's account of these events is somewhat sanitized and must be supplemented with those of the Cypriot chroniclers.

Upon his departure for Rome to settle affairs with the pope and Florimont de Lesparre, Pierre had left his brother, the prince of Antioch, in charge of the kingdom and, as Makhairas says, "to watch over his house he left a very brave knight named Sir John Visconti" (197). According to Makhairas, during his absence Queen Eleanora, Pierre's second wife, became outraged by the king's adulterous conduct with Joanna L'Aleman, who had once been married to one of his knights, Jean de Montolif. She successfully arranged for the unfortunate woman to be tortured so that she should miscarry what she believed, with some justice, was Pierre's child. As the *Chronique d'Amadi* recounts: "Stando il re in ponente, la regina sepe che madona Joanna l'Alemana, dama de Chulu, relitta del quondam signor Thomas de Montolipho, era gravida de otto mesi dal re, et la fece venir in presentia sua et li fece gran vergogna; poi la fece destender in terra, et metter sopra il suo ventre un morter di marmoro, et fece pestar più cose per gittar el putto; et non havendo possuo, il di seguente, fece masinar sopra il ditto suo ventre, con un molin de man, quatro cafisi di formento, et ancora per questo non la gettò. La lassò poi andar a casa sua, et fe guardarla, et come fece la creatura fu portata a la regina, la qual creatura non si sa quel che sia fatto de essa. La dama fu mandata a Cerines cosi sanguinosa, et fu posta in una stretissima pregion" (419–20). The *Chronique de Strambaldi* purports to record the queen's indignant and insulting denunciation of her rival: "Cattiva puttana, tu sei quella che mi separi dal mio marito" (92).

The fate of the baby is unknown. Eleanora had Joanna imprisoned in the castle at Kerynia, where she was treated with kindness by those loyal to Pierre, who was brought word of the affair by a letter sent from her kinsmen in France. As the *Chronique d'Amadi* describes: "Vedendo il re ditta lettera, non dimandar si fu dolente et atristao, perchè non se li poteva portar più triste ne più dolose nove; si sforzava molto di far bona ciera et mostrar allegra faza, per no discoverzer alcun la soa malinconia; ma non poteva, et tanto lo astrinseno pregando li soi homini, che lo vedevano cosi atristato et doloso, che li dicese il suo dispiacer, che in fine per molti lamenti et parole coverte, se acorseno parte" (421).

It is hardly surprising that Pierre vowed a swift vengeance upon his return to Cyprus. But first he released his mistress from imprisonment, as the *Chronique de Strambaldi* recounts: "Et intrò nel monasterio et vedeva la spesa che bisognava all chiesa et alle celle, et venne alla cella della sig-

nora Zuana Lalema, sua inamorata, et vene, et volse inginocchiarsi per basarli il piede; et il re la recevete con gran amore, et commandò et le fu data mille grossi d'argento" (97).

Perhaps in an attempt at revenge, Eleanora had apparently begun an affair of her own with Jean de Morf, the count of Roukha, who had served Pierre loyally and well during a number of his expeditions. Makhairas writes: "And the affair was made known to all the town, namely that so lawless a deed had been done, and all the people were speaking of nothing else, so much that even the street boys were talking about it" (221). Confronted by the prince and other lords, Visconti denied the truth, but agreed upon their urging to write the king about the spreading scandal. Shaken by the news, Pierre returned to Cyprus angry and distrustful. He questioned the queen and Joanna, who each denied there had been any wrongdoing, but said that Visconti, shamed by the queen, had written the king about it out of spite. Makhairas reports: "And the king came for the court, and ordered them to bring the two ladies before him: and he put them into a chamber and there examined them privately about the story which they had told [about the queen]. . . . And he examined each one of them separately; and both of them said the same thing to the king, and he could learn nothing from them. So the king was in the end deceived by the two ladies, and thought that they told him the truth" (227, 229).

But it seems that Pierre did not trust their testimony because he then put the matter before the assembled court of nobles who, holding a private council, began to fear for their own reputation, saying: "It seems to us that it will be better for our fame if we conceal the story" (235). If they admitted that Jean de Morf had been conducting a liaison with the queen, then Pierre would be angry with them for failing to stop their meeting and taking no action against the offending knight. And so they told Pierre that Visconti was a liar. This is the *Chronique d'Amadi*'s version of these events: "Li signori, con gran dispiacer, intenseno tel cosa, et dolce et devotamente cominiciorno a confortar il loro principe per molte belle et honeste rason; et lur li pregò che lo dovesseno consegliar quel che haveva da far in questo caso" (421). Believing them, Pierre had Visconti put in prison.

Line 8128 A frequent insult to Englishmen in French texts of this period is that they are *couez*, that is, "tailed." Jean is an "honorary" Englishmen because of his loyalties to the English crown. For a full discussion of this tradition see Rickard 1953.

Lines 8196ff Pierre was not fooled by the nobles' lies about Visconti even though he agreed to the man's imprisonment, as Makhairas suggests: "Now even with all this the king was not satisfied; nor was he so simple, for he knew how the matter had gone. He began to insult [all the high born ladies, from the least to the greatest] the wives of his enemies who had joined together to shame him" (239). His behavior eventually led the nobles to plot against his life, and Pierre's response was that "he ordered a tower to be built, and in the upper part he built a church, which was called Misericordia . . . and below the surface of the ground it was a prison, which he called Margarita. . . . And he intended to invite a greater gathering, as soon as the moat was finished, and all the great lords and

barons to assemble for a banquet, and then to shut up his brothers in the tower and a number of his knights of whom he was afraid, to prevent them from conspiring among themselves and killing him" (241). These plans came to nothing because Pierre was assassinated before the tower could be finished though Pierre did use the project as a way of punishing some of his enemies (see lines 8352ff). For further details about Pierre's murder and its attendant circumstances see Edbury 1980.

Lines 8255ff Makhairas offers a full account of this expedition: "On the eighth of the month of January, the day being Sunday, 1369 after Christ, the king was at Akaki, and went hunting; and near Akaki there is a small village called Meniko, and it belonged to Sir Henry de Giblet. This knight had an only son whose name was James, and a daughter named Mary who was a widow, and a bastard daughter called Louisa. The said knight was sheriff of Lefkosia and was very fond of hunting; and he had ordered to bring him from Turkey a pair of very beautiful greyhounds. And all the knights, all of them with a very bad grace, went in the king's train, as is the custom of the knights when they go hunting. Whilst the king was hunting, the kennelman of the said sheriff was on his way back from the hunt, and he passed by the count of Akaki on his way to Meniko, and he had with him the two fine dogs. . . . The Count of Tripoli, Sir Peter de Lusignan, the king's lawful son, met the kennelman and asked him, 'To whom do these greyhounds belong?'" (243). The count, then an eight year old child, wanted the dogs for his own and demanded them from their handler, who declined. A note was sent to James de Giblet by the king's son with an offer of payment. James declined somewhat rudely. Upset, the boy began to cry, and his father saw he was upset upon his return from the field. A note was sent to Henri de Giblet, who refused the request for the dogs with the advice that if the king wanted such dogs he could send to Turkey for them. Outraged, Pierre "at once ordered Sir Henry to go at that very moment with his horses and arms to be warden at Paphos, and he sent and put his son James in irons, and sent him off with a hoe to dig in the moat at the Margarita, that is at Misericordia, with the labourers who were working there. And he sent to take his daughter Mary de Giblet and to marry her to Camous the Tailor, for she had been left a widow by Sir Guy de Verni. . . . The lady was prudent: when she saw the quarrel which was between the king and her father she grew frightened, saying that the end of the business would be some evil intention; she went off to the convent of Santa Clara. . . . She heard that he wanted to have her married, and therefore went away thence to the Tortosa convent, and there concealed herself. The king deprived her father of the office of sheriff" (247).

Hunting was important to the Cypriot nobles, as Iorga 1966 points out: "The dogs, like horses, had their tails painted either yellow or red. The animals hunted were onagers, wild asses, and wild sheep, all of which were found in the valleys of the island. The hunt had great significance: it was done in large groups that slept out in tents and sometimes spent a month on such an expedition" (46).

Lines 8393ff The regulations governing the remarriage of heiresses were to be found in the Assizes of Jerusalem. Edbury 1977 states that "a lord had the right to control the marriages of all women between the ages of

twelve and sixty who held fiefs or the *baillage* of fiefs owing *servise de cors*" (345). The regulation governing this right was straightforward: "The woman was summoned to appear in the High Court where she was given a choice of three potential husbands: a widow could not be summoned within a year and a day of her previous husband's death; the prospective husbands had to be peers of the woman, or, in the case of a widow, of her former husband" (346). Obviously, Pierre did not follow these protocols in attempting to force Marie to marry a tailor, nor did he have the right to torture her when she refused.

Lines 8450ff The account of Makhairas suggests that Machaut may be exaggerating the wickedness of Pierre's treatment of Marie, though it was undoubtedly scandalous and cruel: "The king ordered them to torture her, and they tortured her so much that they roasted her very feet. . . . And the lords seeing this said: 'Such things did we never expect to see now and henceforward done to our daughters and to our sons and to our widowed ladies'" (249). In the end, however, Marie relented and agreed to marry Jean de Neuville, the man who had been appointed sheriff of Lefkosia after her father had been removed from that office.

Lines 8496ff Makhairas offers a somewhat different account of these events, but agrees in general with Machaut's version: "And when the lords considered that the king was full of ill will and anger, he had left them and gone out; when the knights considered that he had laid his hand upon the lieges against justice and wrongfully, they all of them together were filled with confusion and anger. . . . And they began immediately to think of a new plan. . . . And all the knights rise up and go to the two brothers of the king" (249). Sensing the great anger of the liege lords, the king's brothers then demanded a royal audience where they presented the grievances and argued that the king had gone against the Assizes. The *Chronique de Strambaldi* offers a full account of the brothers' embassy: "Et andorono li fratelli del re dal re, et li disse il principe suo fratello 'Signor, ne par [che non] con raggion havete fatto alli vostri ligii quello che havete fatto; è giusto che lo diate alla vostra alta gran corte et che lo aldano et che lo giudicano. Et havete fatto contra le leggi et le assise, come havete giurato nella vostra incoronatione. Questi sonno pari vostri, sotto lor giuramento.' Et havendo aldio il re si adirò, et li disse brutte et indebite parole" (106).

Though Pierre's reaction was to abuse them "with ugly and discourteous words," the brothers left with a promise to consult the Assizes and return with a legal opinion. Makhairas gives no indication that after this quarrel Pierre attempted to reconcile with his brothers or seek some reaffirmation of their loyalty to him. In fact, Makhairas recounts how Jean de Monstry tried to make the king's brothers return to the palace, but they refused. This incident only fueled the fires of discontent among the rebellious nobles who, seeing the king insult and mistreat those closest to him, feared increasingly for themselves. They considered themselves released from their oaths of allegiance to Pierre because he had violated his oaths to them as their king, as the *Chronique d'Amadi* relates: "Da poi questa terminatione, alcuni cavalieri se pensorono più oltra, et disseno che del sacramento che il re farà a loro, sarà il medemo che fu del sacramamento

che fece al suo coronamento, quando giuro sette volte, et pur non si ha guardato di romperlo" (425).

Makhairas insists, however, that the princes were not privy to any plot to assassinate the king. He suggests that the nobles simply threatened to leave Cyprus should Pierre continue to abuse the law (263). After the king's brothers departed for bed, the assassination plot was hatched: "The time came when the Enemy should gather in the fruits which he had sown in their hearts, namely that they should kill the king" (263). All the Cypriot chroniclers, however, make a concerted effort to exculpate the brothers even though circumstances point to their complicity with, if not direct involvement in the murder. See Edbury 1980 for a full and cogent argument that both brothers were involved in the plotting and murder. Much of the evidence that Edbury marshals is circumstantial (especially the prince's role in getting the door of the king's bedroom opened to the conspirators), but he also observes that after the assassination Pierre's brothers did nothing to punish the murderers, but, instead, persecuted the late king's friends and advisors.

Line 8589 Pierre's mother was remarried to Philip of Brunswick.

Line 8592ff It was at this dinner that Pierre gave further, disastrous evidence of his unbalanced state of mind. Served with asparagus, the king discovered to his displeasure that there was no oil for its dressing. As Makhairas recounts, "The king grew vexed, for he was full of wrath and in a high passion, and said: 'The steward of the court has served me thus out of obstinacy.' . . . And he sends off at once and throws him into prison, and he threatened that in the morning he would cut off his head" (265). The princes and all assembled nobles were informed of the incident before the night was through. Along with Jacques and Marie de Giblet, the steward was released that night from prison by the order of the princes and the conspirators.

Lines 8639ff Machaut omits a significant detail of the murder. Pierre did not spend that night alone, nor was he with the queen. Instead, as the *Chronique d'Amadi* records, the king heard the conspirators in the hall outside his room: "El re senti el rumor de li lor piedi, et si levò dal letto, et disse: 'Chi son questi che sono venuti quà dentro?' Dama Civa di Scandelion, la qual dormiva con lui quella notte, li disse: 'Signor, et quali ardiran vegnir quà dentro a queste hore, che li vostri fratelli?' La dama si levò immediate, et si coperse con certi drappi, et si aschose in una guardarobba; et come il principe sentì la dama ussir di camera, et lui urtò la porta et intrò dentro, et salutò el re che ancora era in camisa" (425).

Line 8644 The unfortunate chamberlain was Gilet de Cornalie.

Lines 8756ff According to Makhairas, the court steward, Jean Gorap, who had been put under threat of execution the night before because there was no oil for the asparagus, took his revenge by cutting off Pierre's head as he said: "'You wished to-day to cut off my head, and I will cut off yours, and your threat shall fall upon your own self" (267).

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